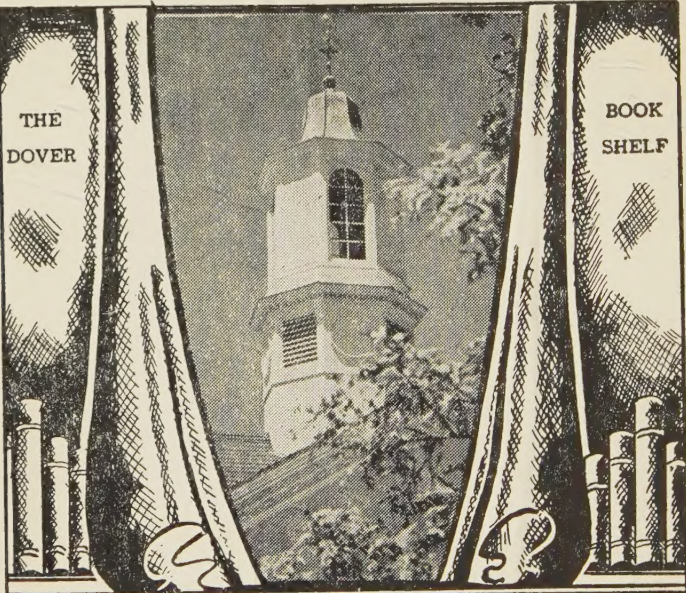


McCONNELL'S MANUAL  
FOR BAPTIST CHURCHES

F. M. McCONNELL

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# McCONNELL'S MANUAL FOR BAPTIST CHURCHES

By F. M. McCONNELL, D. D.

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*Christ also loved the church.—Eph. 5 : 25*

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## PREFACE

THIS MANUAL is offered to Baptist churches because it is believed that such a book suited to modern church life is needed.

The only way Baptists can have unity is by following the teaching of the New Testament and observing the principles which guided the churches of the apostolic period. The constant endeavor has been to stay by the inspired word and recommend only those practises which it supports.

The statement of Baptist doctrine contained in the *New Hampshire Declaration of Faith* was adopted after careful examination of all available Declarations and Confessions. The scriptures usually cited to prove the statements in the Declaration have been carefully examined and revised. Many others have been added, and some which were deemed irrelevant were omitted. It is believed that those cited prove, as fully as a reasonable person would demand, all the things contained in the Declaration. The passages given furnish an adequate defense of Baptist doctrine. Their use for this purpose

## Preface

should convince many that our beliefs and practises are Scriptural.

*The Statement of Faith and Message* adopted in Memphis, Tenn., May 14, 1925, by the Southern Baptist Convention, is also given. The scriptures cited for the New Hampshire Declaration are sufficient for both.

Some positions have been taken that are unusual among our people. Two things have impelled the author to take such positions: (1) They are important. (2) They are Scriptural. Nothing has been written for novelty.

It is earnestly hoped that by the use of this Manual churches may be encouraged and led to transact their business in an orderly, Scriptural way, and promote the doctrine and work of Christ in the world.

F. M. McCONNELL.

BAYLOR UNIVERSITY, DALLAS, TEXAS.

August 1, 1926.

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## PART I



## A CHURCH COVENANT

HAVING been led, as we believe, by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour and, on a profession of our faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, we do now in the presence of God and this assembly, most solemnly enter into agreement with one another, as one body in Christ.

We engage therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the harmony and advancement of this church, in knowledge, holiness, and fellowship; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, defend its ordinances, preserve its discipline, and make known its doctrines. We agree to contribute Scripturally to the support of the ministry, both at home and in foreign lands, to the relief of the poor, and the maintenance of the institutions fostered by this church.

We, also, engage to maintain religious devotions both secretly and in our homes; to educate our children religiously, to seek the salvation of



our children, other kindred, our friends and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be honest, fair, and just in our dealings and exemplary in our deportment. We agree to avoid all tattling, backbiting, and unrighteous anger; to abstain from intoxicants and narcotic drugs, and to use our utmost endeavors to purify and upbuild society.

We further engage to watch over one another in Christian love; to remember each other in prayer, to aid each other in sickness and distress, to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and Christian courtesy in speech and conduct; to be slow, always, to take offense and ever ready to forgive and be reconciled; to be mindful of the rules of life taught by our Saviour, both in avoiding discord and speedily securing agreement and restoration of harmony and Christian fellowship.

We moreover engage that we will continue in this church fellowship and membership until we remove to another place, and that then we will unite with some other New Testament church in which we can carry out the spirit and terms of this agreement according to the word of God, in obedience to our Saviour, under whose authority we live.

# McCONNELL'S MANUAL FOR BAPTIST CHURCHES

## THE CHURCH AN ORGANIZATION

THE reason for organizing religious people is that the need for cooperation is deep rooted in human nature. God so made us that all great movements among men are promoted by organization. Without it no movement can be either powerful or continuous. Civil government requires the organization of states and nations. Education requires organized schools. Whatever movement is to become effective, powerful, and lasting among men demands the organized cooperation of those who would secure such results.

Religion is no exception to this law of human nature. Without organization it is impossible to promote religious movements. To argue otherwise is to argue folly. There is no other means of Christianizing the world.

In the effort to magnify spiritual, personal religion, apart from ordinances and ceremonies, many people have been led to attach far too little importance to the church. True, a church can neither establish nor destroy the saving relation between a soul and God. But it is essential to other things vitally important in evangelizing mankind.

*A Church Defined.* The word, *ekklesia*, translated "church," occurs one hundred and seventeen times in the New Testament. In more than ninety places it means a local organization, a group of people meeting together. In some others it is used in the sense of an ideal, or institution. To illustrate: We speak of "the jury" referring to twelve men, organized, or impaneled, as a body, for the purpose of trying a case in court. We also speak of "the jury" as an English and American institution. In the latter case, we do not refer to any definite group, impaneled or sitting together in any one locality. In the New Testament the word "church" is used in exactly the same way.

In every passage in the New Testament, where the word "church" means an organization, it means a local body, meeting in one place. It never, in a single passage, means a national body, or world-wide organization.

Hiscox says:<sup>1</sup> "First, it is used in its primary or literal sense, to designate a visible, local congregation of Christ's disciples, meeting for worship, instruction, and service. Second, it is used in a secondary and figurative sense, to designate the invisible, universal company, including all of God's true people, on earth and in heaven. There is, then, the visible, local church, and the invisible, universal church. IN THE LATTER CASE THE WORD REPRESENTS A CONCEPTION OF THE MIND, HAVING NO REAL EXISTENCE IN TIME OR PLACE, AND NOT A HISTORICAL FACT, BEING ONLY AN IDEAL MULTITUDE WITHOUT ORGANIZATION, WITHOUT ACTION AND WITHOUT CORPOREAL BEING." (Capitals mine.)

Let it be remembered that in every place in the Bible where the word "church" means an organization, it means a local congregation; and that in every other passage, it is ideal only. Confusing these two meanings of the word has led men to organize vast ecclesiastical systems, contrary to the word of God.

The following list of passages in the New Testament containing *ekklesia* will make this clear. Passages in which "church" means a local or-

<sup>1</sup> Hiscox, *New Directory*, p. 24.

ganization: Matthew 18: 17; Acts 2: 47; 5: 11; 8: 1, 3; 11: 22, 26; 12: 1, 5; 13: 1; 14: 23, 27; 15: 3, 4, 22; 18: 22; 20: 17, 28; Romans 16: 1, 5, 23; 1 Corinthians 1: 2; 4: 17; 6: 4; 11: 18, 22; 12: 28; 14: 4, 5, 12, 19, 23, 28, 35; 15: 9; 16: 19; 2 Corinthians 1: 1; Galatians 1: 13; Philippians 3: 6; 4: 15; Colossians 4: 15, 16; 1 Thessalonians 1: 1; 2 Thessalonians 1: 1; 1 Timothy 3: 5; 5: 16; Philemon 2; James 5: 14; 1 Peter 5: 13; 3 John 6, 9, 10; Revelation 2: 1, 8, 12, 18; 3: 1, 7, 14.

In the following passages "church" means an ideal, or institution and not an organization; Matthew 16: 18; Acts 7: 38; 1 Corinthians 10: 32; Ephesians 1: 22; 3: 10, 21; 5: 23, 24, 25, 27, 29, 32; Colossians 1: 18, 24; 1 Timothy 3: 15; Hebrews 2: 12; 12: 23.

I have given the word, as meaning an institution, the benefit of all doubt. Some readers may very honestly think that in several passages so classified, I should have put the word under the head of a local organization. It does not occur in the Old Testament.

There is one other passage, where *ekklesia* occurs three times and is translated "assembly," Acts 19: 32, 39, 41: "Some therefore cried one thing and some another: for the assembly was in confusion; and the more part knew not

wherefore they had come together. . . But if ye seek anything about other matters, it shall be settled in the regular assembly. And when he had thus spoken he dismissed the assembly." It is clear that in these verses the "assembly" was a recognized body of people met together to call those to account who were teaching against their goddess, Diana. The town clerk, or recorder, took charge of the meeting and rendered a satisfactory decision.

This passage very strongly supports the fact that, in every place where the word means an organization, it was a local body of people, met together to attend to business in which the members were interested. In religious assemblies, or churches, it was, of course, the Lord's business.

The word "churches" occurs thirty-six times in the New Testament. IN EVERY PLACE IT MEANS LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS OF GOD'S PEOPLE, FOLLOWERS OF JESUS CHRIST.

See Acts 9: 31; 15: 41; 16: 5; Romans 16: 4, 16; 1 Corinthians 7: 17; 11: 16; 14: 33, 34; 16: 1, 19; 2 Corinthians 8: 1, 18, 19, 23, 24; 11: 8, 28; 12: 13; Galatians 1: 2, 22; 1 Thessalonians 2: 14; 2 Thessalonians 1: 4; Revelation 1: 4, 11, 20; 2: 7, 11, 17, 23, 29; 3: 6; 22: 16.

The word "churches" occurs in one other place, Acts 19: 37, but the expression "robbers of churches" (A. V.) is one Greek word, *hierosulos*, and means "robbers of temples," as translated in the Revised version.

This study proves that there is not a single place in the New Testament where an organized church was anything else than a local organization. There is no reference to a State, national, or world-wide Church in the Word of God. Baptists may affirm this with perfect confidence and appeal to the entire record in the New Testament.

This truth is of very great value to the world; because it would make impossible all the evils of the union of Church and State if it governed the doctrines and lives of men.

Perhaps there is no better definition of a church than the brief one given by Dr. J. M. Pendleton:<sup>2</sup> "A church is a congregation of Christ's baptized disciples, united in the belief of what he said and covenanting to do what he commanded."

This definition sets out four things: (1) A church is a local band of people. (2) Those composing it are Christ's baptized disciples. (3) They believe what he taught. (4) They

<sup>2</sup> *Church Manual*, p. 8.



covenant, or agree among themselves, to do what he commanded.

The church is a *voluntary* organization. This is in harmony with God's plan with men. God respects the individual will; hence, all the appeals of religion are for voluntary action, the decisions of men's wills.

The form of government in New Testament churches was in harmony with the voluntary principle. All the churches were, therefore, little republics, democracies, in which all the members enjoyed equal rights and all bore their personal, religious obligations. The form of government is important. *A monarchy can never promote democratic principles.* Hence the Holy Spirit gave Christ's people the *only* form of church government which is compatible with voluntary religion.

The New Testament churches always bore the names of the *localities where they worshiped*. Such should be the case today. It has become necessary, because of a multiplicity of denominations, to employ different names; but Christ's people should return, as speedily as possible, to simple, Scriptural names for their churches. They should be called by the names of their locations. Some have contended that the name of a church should be "Christian." No church

in the New Testament bore that name. Individuals were called "Christians" three times, the only times the word occurs, Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16; but no church was called a "Christian church."

## II

### THE DOCTRINES OF A CHURCH

IT is proper for any organization to set forth clearly what its members believe. There are several reasons why this is true:

1. It is fair to others. It lets all men know what are the principles actuating those thus organized. It is in harmony with the passage which says: "Ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason for the hope that is in you" (1 Peter 3:15). If an individual may tell his faith, surely an organized church may; and, if it may be told, surely it may be written or printed with equal or greater propriety.

2. It is just to the members themselves. They have a right to do what they can to be properly understood. Nothing can prevent misunderstanding, misrepresentations, and unjust persecution better than a clear statement of the system of doctrines and principles upon which an organization is founded.

3. It promotes harmony and cooperation founded on intelligence. This is a day of coop-

eration, and every good man hopes for its increase until it becomes world-wide and gives to all men an opportunity to become universally helpful. There is no well-founded hope of this blessed condition apart from world-wide intelligence. If a religious body would intelligently promote its principles and work, both its doctrines and its purposes should be given the widest, most impressive publicity.

With these reasons guiding them, Baptists, from time to time, have published declarations of faith. They have not been identical, but have been in approximate harmony with each other. The one which follows was framed by a committee, of which Dr. J. Newton Brown was chairman, and was adopted by the New Hampshire Baptist Convention. That committee labored two or three years and submitted the Declaration of Faith which has been adopted by more Baptist churches than any other declaration in the world. It is not a creed, to be binding, but a declaration of what we believe the Scriptures teach. The Scriptures only are binding upon Baptists.

## DECLARATION OF FAITH

## I. The Scriptures

We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired; and is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction; that it has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth without any mixture of error for its matter; that it reveals the principles by which God will judge us; and therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the world the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions should be tried.

Passages supporting the statement are:

2 Tim. 3:16, 17; Exod. 25:22; Num. 11:24, 25; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 Peter 1:11; 2 Sam. 23:2; Matt. 22:43; Acts 1:16; Luke 1:70; Rom. 1:2; 3:2; Deut. 4:12, 14; 12:32; Rev. 22:18, 19; Prov. 30:6; John 17:17; Ps. 98:2; 2 Tim. 3:15; 1 Cor. 1:21; 1 Peter 1:10, 12; Acts 11:14; Rom. 1:16; John 5:39, 40; Acts 10:43; 3:18, 19; Isa. 55:3; 61:1-3; Matt. 24:14; Acts 28:28. Prov. 30:5; Ps. 12:6; 96:13; John 12:48. See Deut. 18:18, 19; John 12:45, 46; Rom. 2:16; 2 Tim. 4:1; James 4:12; 1 Cor. 1:10; 2 Cor. 13:11; Eph. 4:3-6; Phil. 1:27; Col. 2:1-3; Isa. 52:8; Jer. 3:17, 18; John 17:20, 21; Phil. 3:16; Amos 3:3; Matt. 24:35; Isa. 8:20; 1 Thess. 5:21; Isa. 1:10; 1 John 4:6; Jude 3; Eph. 6:17; Ps. 119:59.

## II. The True God

We believe that there is one, and only one living, and true God, an infinite, intelligent Spirit: whose name is JEHOVAH, the Maker and Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth; inexpressibly glorious in holiness, and worthy of all possible honor, confidence, and love; that in the unity of the godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; equal in every divine perfection, and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.

Passages supporting the statement are:

John 4: 24; Acts 17: 24; Gen. 1: 1, 24, 27; 2: 7; Exod. 20: 11; Ps. 147: 5; 83: 18; Heb. 3: 4; Rom. 1: 20; Jer. 10: 10; Neh. 9: 6; 1 Chron. 16: 26; Prov. 22: 2; Ps. 89: 11; 121: 2; Exod. 15: 11; Isa. 6: 3; Rev. 4: 8; 1 Peter 1: 15, 16; 1 Sam. 2: 2; Ps. 18: 30; 47: 8; Matt. 22: 37, 38; Deut. 6: 5; Rev. 4: 11; Jer. 2: 12, 13; Gen. 1: 26; Matt. 28: 18; John 15: 26; 14: 26; 16: 14, 15; 1 Cor. 8: 6; 12: 3; 1 Tim. 3: 16; John 6: 27; 1 Peter 1: 2; 1 Chron. 29: 10; Isa. 63: 16; 64: 8; Matt. 6: 9; John 10: 30; Luke 22: 70; John 14: 7; Isa. 9: 6; Micah 5: 2; John 1: 1, 14; 6: 62; 17: 5; Col. 1: 17; Heb. 1: 10-12; 13: 8; Rev. 1: 8, 11, 17; 5: 13; Col. 2: 9; Acts 5: 3, 4; 2 Cor. 13: 14; Ps. 139: 7; Matt. 10: 20; Mark 13: 11; Eph. 4: 30; 1 Cor. 3: 16; 6: 19; Rom. 8: 2; Heb. 9: 14; 1 Cor. 2: 10; John 3: 8; 1 John 3: 1. See Titus 3: 5.

### III. The Fall of Man

We believe that man was created in holiness, under the law of his Maker; but by voluntary transgression fell from that holy and happy state; in consequence of which all mankind are now sinners; not by constraint but by choice; being by nature utterly void of that holiness required by the law of God, positively inclined to evil; and therefore under just condemnation to eternal ruin, without defense or excuse.

Gen. 1: 27; 9: 6; Eccl. 7: 29; Isa. 43: 7; Gen. 5: 1, 3: 6, 24; Rom. 5: 12, 19; 8: 7; 1 Kings 8: 46; Ps. 14: 3; 53: 3; 130: 3; Prov. 20: 9; Eccl. 7: 20; Isa. 64: 6; Micah 7: 2; Rom. 3: 23; Gal. 3: 22; 1 John 1: 8; 5: 19; Isa. 53: 6; Gen. 6: 12; Ps. 14: 3; 58: 3; Rom. 3: 9, 18; Gen. 17: 1; Deut. 18: 13; 1 Kings 8: 61; Matt. 5: 48; Lev. 19: 2; Eph. 2: 3; Rom. 1: 18; 2 Kings 22: 13; John 3: 36; Rom. 2: 9; Eph. 5: 6; Gal. 3: 10; Rom. 9: 20; Job 40: 2; 9: 3; Isa. 45: 9; Rom. 1: 20; 3: 19.

### IV. The Way of Salvation

We believe that salvation of sinners is wholly of grace; through the mediatorial office of the Son of God, who by the appointment of the Father, freely took upon him our nature, yet without sin; honored the divine law by his personal obedience, and by his death made a full atonement for our sins; that having risen from



the dead he is now enthroned in heaven; and, uniting in his wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfections, he is in every way qualified to be a suitable, compassionate, and all-sufficient Saviour.

Eph. 2: 5, 8; Acts 15: 11; Rom. 4: 16; 1 John 4: 10; Eph. 1: 7; 2 Thess. 2: 16; Titus 3: 7; John 3: 16; 1: 10, 14; Rom. 3: 24; Heb. 4: 14, 16; Col. 1: 14; Phil. 2: 6, 8; Heb. 2: 14, 15; 9: 12; Rev. 5: 9; 2 Cor. 5: 21; Isa. 42: 3, 21; 51: 4; Phil. 2: 7, 8; Gal. 4: 4, 5; Rom. 3: 21, 22; Isa. 53: 4, 5, 6, 8, 10; Matt. 20: 28; Rom. 3: 21, 26; 4: 25; 5: 6, 8; 1 Cor. 15: 1-4; Heb. 9: 15; 1: 3, 8; Col. 3: 1; Ps. 68: 18; John 17: 5; Rom. 8: 34; Eph. 4: 10; 1 Tim. 3: 16; Heb. 9: 24; 10: 12; 2: 18; 4: 15; 7: 25.

## V. Justification

We believe that the great gospel blessing which Christ secures to such as believe in him is Justification; that Justification includes the pardon of sin, and the promise of eternal life on principles of righteousness; that it is bestowed, not in consideration of any work of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood; by virtue of which faith his perfect righteousness is freely imputed to us of God; that it brings us into a state of most blessed peace and favor with God, and secures every other blessing needful for time and eternity.

1 Thess. 5: 9, 10; Heb. 9: 13, 14; John 1: 16; Acts 13: 39; 10: 43; Rom. 8: 1; 10: 4; 5: 9; Gen. 15: 6; John 5: 24; 3: 36; 3: 16; 6: 40, 47; Rom. 6: 22; 1 Tim. 1: 15, 16; Titus 3: 5, 6; Rom. 4: 4, 5; 5: 21; 6: 23; Phil. 3: 9; Rom. 5: 19; Isa. 53: 5, 10, 11; Rom. 3: 24, 28; 4: 23-25; 1 Cor. 1: 30; Col. 2: 13, 14; Gal. 2: 16; Rom. 5: 1, 2; 5: 11; 1 Cor. 1: 31; Matt. 6: 33; Eph. 2: 15, 19.

## VI. The Freeness of Salvation

We believe that the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the gospel; that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a cordial, penitent, and obedient faith; and that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth but his own inherent depravity and voluntary rejection of the gospel, which rejection involves him in an aggravated condemnation.

Rev. 22: 17; Isa. 55: 1; Luke 14: 17; Matt. 6: 24; John 6: 51; 7: 17, 37; 10: 9; Mark 1: 15; Rom. 1: 15, 17; Acts 17: 30; 26: 20; 2 Cor. 6: 2; Acts 20: 21; John 5: 40; Matt. 23: 37; Rom. 9: 31, 32 (comp. 10: 1-4); Prov. 1: 24-27; Acts 13: 46; Isa. 1: 18; Luke 12: 47; John 3: 19; Matt. 11: 20-24; Luke 19: 27; 2 Thess. 1: 8.

## VII. The Grace of Regeneration

We believe that in order to be saved, sinners must be regenerated, or born again; that regeneration consists in giving a holy disposition to

the mind; that it is effected in a manner above our comprehension by the power of the Holy Spirit, in connection with Divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the gospel, and that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance, and faith, and newness of life.

John 3: 3, 7; Rev. 21: 27; 2 Cor. 5: 17; Ezek. 36: 26; Deut. 30: 6; Rom. 2: 28, 29; 5: 5; 1 John 4: 7; 3: 1; Rom. 8: 9; 1 Cor. 12: 3; John 3: 8; 1: 13; 1 Cor. 1: 30; Phil 2: 13; Eccl. 11: 5; Ezek. 36: 26; Rom. 10: 17; Eph. 5: 26; Heb. 4: 12; 1 Peter 1: 22-25; 1 John 5: 1, 2; Eph. 4: 20-22; Col. 3: 9, 10; John 14: 21; 15: 14; Eph. 5: 9; Rom. 8: 10, 14; Gal. 5: 16, 22, 23; Rom. 6: 4, 5; Eph. 5: 1, 2, 15; Col. 2: 6; 1 John 1: 7; 2: 6.

### VIII. Repentance and Faith

We believe that Repentance and Faith are sacred duties, and also inseparable graces, wrought in our souls by the regenerating Spirit of God; whereby being deeply convinced of our guilt, danger, and helplessness, and of the way of salvation by Christ, we turn to God with unfeigned contrition, confession, and supplication for mercy, at the same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as our Prophet, Priest, and King, relying on him alone as the only and all-sufficient Saviour.

Mark 1: 15; Acts 11: 18; Eph. 2: 8; 1 John 5: 1; Acts 20: 21; 2 Tim. 2: 25, 26; Luke 13: 3; Acts 3: 19; 2 Cor. 7: 10; John 16: 8; Acts 2: 37, 38; 16: 30, 31; Ps. 38: 4; Acts 24: 25; 1 Cor. 14: 25; Job 33: 27, 28; Luke 18: 13; 15: 18, 24; James 4: 7, 10; Rom. 10: 12, 13; Acts 20: 21; 5: 31; Rev. 11: 15; Heb. 5: 6; 4: 14, 16.

### IX. God's Purpose of Grace

We believe that election is the eternal purpose of God, according to which he graciously regenerates, sanctifies, and saves sinners; that being perfectly consistent with the free agency of man, it comprehends all the means in connection with the end; that it is a most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, being infinitely free, wise, holy, and unchangeable, that it utterly excludes boasting, and promotes humility, love, prayer, praise, trust in God, and active imitation of his free mercy; that it encourages the use of means in the highest degree; that it may be ascertained by its effects in all who truly believe the gospel; that it is the foundation of Christian assurance, and that to ascertain it with regard to ourselves demands and deserves the utmost diligence.

2 Tim. 1: 8, 9; Eph. 1: 3, 4; 1 Peter 1: 1-5; Rom. 11: 4-6; 1 John 4: 19; Hosea 12: 9; Rom. 8: 14, 15, 19, 24; 2 Thess. 2: 13, 14; Acts 13: 48, 49; 15: 14-16; Josh.

24: 3; Ps. 119: 173, 174; Luke 10: 42; Heb. 11: 24, 27; Rev. 22: 17; Exod. 33: 19; Eph. 1: 11, 13; Rom. 9: 23, 24; Jer. 1: 3, 5; James 1: 17, 18; Rom. 11: 35, 36; John 3: 16; 1 Cor. 4: 7; Rom. 3: 27; 1 Cor. 1: 29; Eph. 2: 9; Rom. 4: 16; Col. 3: 12, 13; 1 Cor. 3: 5-7; 15: 10; Acts 1: 24; 1 Thess. 2: 12, 13; 1 Peter 2: 9; Luke 18: 7, 8; John 15: 16; Eph. 1: 16, 19; 1 Thess. 2: 11, 12; 2 Tim. 2: 10; 1 Cor. 9: 22; Rom. 8: 28-30; John 6: 37, 40; 2 Peter 1: 10, 11; Rom. 10: 14, 15; 11: 13, 14; 2 Cor. 1: 10, 11; 1 Thess. 1: 4, 10; Eph. 2: 10; James 1: 18, 21; Rom. 8: 33-39; Col. 2: 2, 3; Heb. 10: 20, 22; 1 John 4: 10, 13; Phil. 3: 12; Heb. 4: 11; 1 John 3: 2; Ps. 4: 3, 4; Rom. 8: 16, 17; Isa. 12: 2; 1 John 5: 13; 1 Cor. 6: 15; 2 Cor. 13: 5.

## X. Sanctification

We believe that Sanctification is the process by which, according to the will of God, we are made partakers of his holiness; that it is a progressive work; that it is begun in regeneration, and that it is carried on in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, the Healer and Comforter, in the continual use of the appointed means—especially, the word of God, self-examination, self-denial, watchfulness, and prayer.

1 Thess. 4: 3; 5: 23; 2 Cor. 7: 1; Eph. 1: 4; Prov. 4: 18; Job 17: 9; Ps. 84: 7; 92: 12; 2 Cor. 3: 18; 2 Peter 1: 5-8; Eph. 4: 15; Col. 1: 10-12; 1 Thess. 3: 12, 13; 4: 10, 12; Phil. 3: 12-16; 1 John 2: 29; John 3: 10; Rom.

8: 5; Phil. 2: 12, 15; Eph. 4: 11-13; 1 Peter 2: 1-3; John 17: 17; Eph. 5: 26; Matt. 26: 41; Eph. 6: 18; 4: 30-32.

## XI. The Perseverance of the Saints

We believe that such only are real believers as endure unto the end; that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors; that a special providence watches over their welfare, and they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

John 8: 31; Ps. 37: 24, 28; 1 John 3: 9; 2: 27, 28; 5: 18; Heb. 3: 14; 1 John 2: 19; John 17: 12; Job 17: 9; Rom. 8: 28; Matt. 6: 30; Ps. 121: 3-5; 125: 1, 2; 73: 24; 138: 8; Jer. 32: 40; Luke 10: 42; 22: 31, 32; John 6: 37-39; 10: 28, 29; Rom. 8: 33, 34; 11: 29; 1 Cor. 1: 8, 9; 2 Cor. 1: 21, 22; Phil. 1: 6; 2: 12, 13; Jude 24, 25; 2 Kings 6: 16; Heb. 13: 5; 1 John 4: 4; 2 Tim. 1: 12; 4: 18; 1 Peter 1: 4, 5; John 4: 14; 5: 24.

## XII. The Harmony of the Law and the Gospel

We believe that the law of God is the eternal and unchangeable rule of his moral government; that it is holy and just and good; and that the inability which the Scriptures ascribes to fallen men to fulfil its precepts, arises entirely from their love of sin; to deliver them from which, and to restore them through a

Mediator to unfeigned obedience to the holy law, is one great end of the gospel, and of the means of grace connected with the establishment of the visible church.

Rom. 3: 31; Matt. 5: 17; Luke 16: 17; Rom. 4: 15; 1 John 3: 4; 5: 3; Rom. 7: 12, 14; 7: 22; Gal. 3: 21; Ps. 119; 1 Tim. 1: 8-10; Ps. 40: 8; Rom. 8: 7; Josh. 24: 19; Jer. 13: 23; Rom. 1: 28; Titus 1: 15; Rom. 10: 4; 8: 2-4; 1 Tim. 1: 5; Heb. 8: 10, 11; Rom. 7: 6; Eph. 2: 15-17; Gal. 3: 12-14.

### XIII. A Gospel Church

We believe that a visible church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers; associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by his laws; and exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by his word; that its only Scriptural officers are bishops, or pastors, and deacons, whose qualifications, claims, and duties are defined in the epistles to Timothy and Titus.

Matt. 18: 17; 1 Cor. 1: 2; Acts 5: 11; 11: 22; 8: 1; 1 Cor. 1: 13; Rom. 6: 4; Col. 2: 12; Rom. 16: 1, 5, 23; 1 Cor. 4: 17; 14: 23; 3 John 9; 1 Tim. 3: 5; Acts 2: 41, 42; Phil. 1: 5; 1 Cor. 11: 2; 2 Thess. 3: 6; Rom. 16: 17-20; Matt. 18: 15-18; Matt. 28: 20; John 14: 15; 15: 12; 14: 21; 1 Thess. 1: 1 (comp. 1 Thess 4: 2); 2 John 6;



Gal. 6: 2; 1 John 2: 4; 1 Cor. 14: 12; Phil. 1: 27; 1 Cor. 12: 1, 12; 1: 4, 8; Phil. 1: 1; Acts 14: 23; 1 Tim. 3: 1; 3: 8; Titus 1: 5-7.

#### XIV. Baptism and the Lord's Supper

We believe that Christian Baptism is the immersion in water of a believer, in the name of the Father and Son and Holy Ghost; to show forth, in a solemn and beautiful emblem, our faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, with its effect, in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life; that it is prerequisite to the privileges of a church relation, and to the Lord's Supper, in which the members of the church by the sacred use of bread and wine, are to commemorate together the dying love of Christ, preceded always by self-examination.

Mark 1: 5, 9; Acts 8: 36-39; Matt. 3: 5, 6; John 4: 1, 2; 3: 22, 23; Mark 16: 16; Acts 1: 21, 22; 16: 32-34; 18: 8; 8: 12; Matt. 28: 19; Acts 10: 47, 48; Gal. 3: 26-28; Rom. 6: 4; Col. 2: 12; Acts 22: 16; Rom. 6: 5; Acts 2: 41, 42; Matt. 28: 19, 20; 1 Cor. 11: 26; Matt. 26: 26-30; Mark 14: 22-24; Luke 22: 14-20; 1 Cor. 11: 28; 5: 8; 10: 16, 21; 11: 17-29.

#### XV. The Christian Sabbath

We believe that the first day of the week is the Lord's Day, or Christian Sabbath; and is

to be kept sacred to religious purposes, by abstaining from secular labor and all sinful recreations, by the devout observance of all the means of grace, both private and public, and by preparation for that rest that remaineth for the people of God.

Acts 20: 7; Mark 16: 9-14; John 20: 19-21; 1 Cor. 16: 2 (comp. Acts 2: 1 and Lev. 23: 15, 16); Exod. 20: 8; 31: 15; 34: 21; 35: 2; Deut. 5: 12, 15; Neh. 10: 31; Isa. 56: 2; Jer. 17: 21, 27; Matt. 28: 1, 5, 6, 9; Luke 6: 5; John 20: 26, 29; 20: 1, 11, 16; Ps. 118: 22, 24; Rev. 1: 10, 11; 1 Peter 2: 7; Heb. 4: 8; Isa. 58: 13, 14; Luke 13: 10-17; Rev. 1: 9-11; Matt. 6: 6; Acts 20: 20; Lev. 23: 3; Heb. 10: 24, 25; Lev. 19: 30; Num. 28: 25, 26; Luke 4: 16-21; Ps. 26: 8; 65: 4.

## XVI. Civil Government

We believe that Civil Government is of divine appointment, for the interests and good order of human society; and that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored and obeyed, except only in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ; who is the only Lord of the conscience and the Prince of the kings of the earth.

Rom. 13: 1-7; Deut. 16: 18; 2 Sam. 23: 3; Exod. 18: 21-23; Jer. 30: 21; Acts 26: 2; 5: 28, 29; Matt. 10: 28; Dan. 3: 15-18; 6: 7-10; Acts 4: 17-20; Matt. 23: 10;

Rom. 14: 3, 4; Rev. 19: 16; Ps. 72: 11; 2: 10, 11; Rom. 14: 11; 1 Tim. 6: 15; Rev. 17: 14.

## XVII. The Righteous and the Wicked

We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked; that such only as through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in his esteem; while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in his sight wicked and under the curse; and this distinction holds among men both in and after death.

Mal. 3: 18; Prov. 12: 26; Gen. 18: 23; Jer. 15: 19; Rom. 6: 16; 2: 2, 11; Prov. 10: 6; 16: 25; 12: 7; 13: 21; 21: 15; Rom. 1: 16, 17; 1 John 2: 28, 29; 3: 3, 8; Rom. 6: 18-22; 1 Cor. 1: 30; 1 Peter 4: 17, 18; Gal. 3: 10; 1 John 5: 19; John 3: 36; Isa. 57: 21; Ps. 10: 4; Isa. 55: 6, 7; John 16: 8; 2 Thess. 2: 10, 12; Prov. 14: 32; Luke 16: 25; John 8: 24; Prov. 10: 24; Luke 12: 5; 9: 25, 26; John 12: 26; Eccles. 3: 17.

## XVIII. The World to Come

We believe that the end of the world is approaching; that at the Last Day Christ will descend from heaven, and raise the dead from the grave to final retribution; that a solemn

separation will take place; that the wicked will be adjudged to endless punishment, and the righteous to endless joy; and that this judgment will fix forever the final state of men in heaven or hell, on principles of righteousness.

1 Peter 4: 7; 1 Cor. 7: 29-31; Heb. 1: 10-12; 1 John 2: 17; Matt. 13: 39; 2 Peter 3: 7-10; 2 Cor. 4: 18; Acts 1: 11; Rev. 1: 7; Heb. 9: 28; Acts 3: 21; 1 Thess. 4: 13-18; 5: 2; Matt. 26: 64; Mark 14: 62; Luke 21: 27; Matt. 16: 24; Acts 24: 15; 1 Cor. 15: 12-58; Luke 14: 14; Dan. 12: 2; John 5: 28, 29; 6: 40; 11: 24, 25; Acts 10: 42; Matt. 13: 49; 13: 37-43; 25: 31, 33-46; Luke 16: 26; Rev. 22: 14, 15; 21: 27; Matt. 25: 35-41; Rev. 22: 10-12; 1 Cor. 6: 9-11; Mark 9: 43-48; 2 Peter 2: 9, 12; Jude 7; Phil. 3: 18, 19; Rom. 6: 22, 23; 2 Cor. 5: 10, 11; 4: 18; 2 Tim. 4: 1, 2; Jude 14, 15; Rom. 3: 5, 6; 2 Thess. 1: 6-12; Heb. 6: 2; 1 Cor. 4: 4, 5; Acts 17: 31; Rev. 20: 11, 15; 1 John 2: 28; 4: 17; 2 Peter 3: 11, 12.

## SOUTHERN BAPTIST DECLARATION

In the session of the Southern Baptist Convention at Memphis, Tenn., May 14, 1925, a committee on "The Baptist Faith and Message" appointed the year before, brought in its report. It was read by Dr. E. Y. Mullins, President of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, at Louisville, Ky. The text of this important denominational document is reproduced here, as follows:

### The Scriptures

1. We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired, and is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction; that it has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter; that it reveals the principles by which God will judge us: and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried.

### God

2. There is one and only one living and true God, an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe, infinite in holiness and all other perfections, to whom we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. He is revealed to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, each with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

### The Fall of Man

3. Man was created by the special act of God, as recorded in Genesis: "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created

he him; male and female created he them" (Gen. 1: 27); "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Gen. 2: 7). He was created in a state of holiness under the law of his Maker, but through the temptation of Satan he transgressed the command of God and fell from his original holiness and righteousness; whereby his posterity inherit a nature corrupt and in bondage to sin, are under condemnation, and as soon as they are capable of moral action, become actual transgressors.

### The Way of Salvation

4. The salvation of sinners is wholly of grace, through the mediatorial office of the Son of God who by the Holy Spirit was born of the Virgin Mary and took upon him our nature, yet without sin; honored the divine law by his personal obedience, and made atonement for our sins by his death. Being risen from the dead, he is now enthroned in heaven, and, uniting in his person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfections, he is in every way qualified to be a compassionate and all-sufficient Saviour.

### Justification

5. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of righteousness of all sinners who believe in Christ. This blessing is bestowed, not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but through the redemption that is in and through Jesus Christ. It brings us into a state of most blessed peace and favor with God, and secures every other needed blessing.

### The Freeness of Salvation

6. The blessings of salvation are made free to all by the gospel. It is the duty of all to accept them by penitent and obedient faith. Nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner except his own voluntary refusal to accept Jesus Christ as Teacher, Saviour, and Lord.

### Regeneration

7. Regeneration or the new birth is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit, whereby we become partakers of the divine nature and a holy disposition is given, leading to the love and practise of righteousness. It is a work of God's free grace conditioned upon faith in Christ and

made manifest by the fruit which we bring forth to the glory of God.

### Repentance and Faith

8. We believe that repentance and faith are sacred duties, and also inseparable graces, wrought in our souls by the regenerating Spirit of God; whereby being deeply convinced of our guilt, danger, and helplessness, and of the way of salvation by Christ, we turn to God with unfeigned contrition, confession, and supplication for mercy; at the same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as our Prophet, Priest, and King, and relying on him alone as the only and all-sufficient Saviour.

### God's Purpose of Grace

9. Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which he regenerates, sanctifies, and saves sinners. It is perfectly consistent with the free agency of man, and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is a most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and promotes humility. It encourages the use of means in the highest degree.



### Sanctification

10. Sanctification is the process by which the regenerate gradually attain to moral and spiritual perfection through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in their hearts. It continues throughout the earthly life, and is accomplished by the use of all the ordinary means of grace, and particularly by the word of God.

### Perseverance

11. All real believers endure to the end. Their continuance in well-doing is the mark which distinguishes them from mere professors. A special Providence cares for them, and they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

### A Gospel Church

12. A church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ, governed by his law, and exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges, invested in them by his word, and seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Its Scriptural officers are bishops or elders and deacons.

### Baptism and the Lord's Supper

13. Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The act is a symbol of our faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour. It is prerequisite to the privileges of a church relation and the Lord's Supper, in which the members of the church, by the use of bread and wine, commemorate the dying love of Christ.

### The Lord's Day

14. The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should be employed in exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private, and by refraining from worldly amusements, and resting from secular employments, works of necessity and mercy only excepted.

### The Righteous and the Wicked

15. There is radical and essential difference between the righteous and wicked. Those only who are justified through the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and sanctified by the Holy Spirit

are truly righteous in his sight. Those who continue in impenitence and unbelief are in his sight wicked and are under condemnation. This distinction between the righteous and the wicked holds in and after death, and will be made manifest at the judgment when final and everlasting awards are made to all men.

### **The Resurrection**

16. The Scriptures clearly teach that Jesus rose from the dead. His grave was emptied of its contents. He appeared to the disciples after his resurrection in many convincing manifestations. He now exists in his glorified body at God's right hand. There will be a resurrection of the righteous and the wicked. The bodies of the righteous will conform to the glorious spiritual body of Jesus.

### **The Return of the Lord**

17. The New Testament teaches in many places the visible and personal return of Jesus to this earth. "This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." The time of his coming is not revealed. "Of that day and hour knoweth no one, no, not the

angels in heaven, but my Father only " (Matt. 24:36). It is the duty of all believers to live in readiness for his coming and by diligence in good works to make manifest to all men the reality and power of their hope in Christ.

### Religious Liberty

18. God alone is Lord of the conscience, and he has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to his word or not contained in it. Church and State should be separate. The State owes to the Church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the State more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The State has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The State has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free Church in a free State is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and un-

hindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

### Peace and War

19. It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ they should do all in their power to put an end to war.

The true remedy for the war spirit is the pure gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of his teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of his law of love.

We urge Christian people throughout the world to pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace, and to oppose everything likely to provoke war.

### Education

20. Christianity is the religion of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is therefore a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for

knowledge. An adequate system of schools is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people. The cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is coordinate with the cause of missions and general benevolence, and should receive along with these the liberal support of the churches.

### Social Service

21. Every Christian is under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ regnant in his own life and in human society; to oppose in the spirit of Christ every form of greed, selfishness, and vice; to provide for the orphaned, the aged, the helpless, and the sick; to seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love; to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good-will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and his truth. All means and methods used in social service for the amelioration of society and the establishment of righteousness among men must finally depend on the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Christ Jesus.

### Cooperation

22. Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure cooperation for the great objects of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over each other or over the churches. They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner. Individual members of New Testament churches should cooperate with each other, and the churches themselves should cooperate with each other in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent program for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary cooperation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. It is permissible and desirable as between the various Christian denominations, when the end to be attained is itself justified, and when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and his word as revealed in the New Testament.

### Evangelism and Missions

23. It is the duty of every Christian man and woman, and the duty of every church of Christ, to seek to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life. It is also expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by personal effort and by all other methods sanctioned by the gospel of Christ.

### Stewardship

24. God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to him. We have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in our possessions. We are therefore under obligation to serve him with our time, talents, and material possessions; and should recognize all these as entrusted to us to use for the glory of God and helping others. Christians should cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately,



and liberally contribute of their means to advancing the Redeemer's cause on earth.

### **The Kingdom**

25. The Kingdom of God is the reign of God in the heart and life of the individual in every human relationship, and in every form and institution of organized human society. The chief means for promoting the Kingdom of God on earth are preaching the gospel of Christ, and teaching the principles of righteousness contained therein. The Kingdom of God will be complete when every thought and will of man shall be brought into captivity to the will of Christ. And it is the duty of all Christ's people to pray and labor continually that his Kingdom may come and his will be done on earth as it is done in heaven.

### III

## DISTINCTIVE BAPTIST BELIEFS

THOSE who have read the two foregoing Declarations of Faith will readily see that Christian people of all denominations agree in the belief of many of these statements. There are some of the articles, however, which are specially held by Baptists and distinguish our people from others. Some others may believe them partially, but we believe them to an extent and in a manner which justify calling attention to them.

*The Fall of Man.* We believe that when God made man, all of man's faculties and powers were so perfect that he had the ability to render perfect obedience to God under the moral law. In that state he communed with God and God approved of all he did because it was in harmony with God's will. When man voluntarily violated God's law, there resulted degeneration of every faculty and power in man so that, because of moral weakness, it was, henceforth, impossible for man to render such obedience as perfect Justice demanded. The reason-

ing powers became imperfect, the emotions were stirred by the sinful appeals of Satan, and the will impelled man to disobedience. No faculty escaped the contamination of sin, and the result was a continual falling short of perfect obedience to the law. Nor was it ever possible, thereafter, for man to be obedient as angels are; i. e., to know and obey all the laws of God. History, observation, and experience prove this to be true. Baptists do not deceive themselves by wishing that this condition might, after all, be otherwise, or by hoping that it will, some time, be otherwise through self-culture; but accept the fact that man is hopelessly unable to be as an angel in this life, and thus be approved of God.

*The Way of Salvation.* Baptists believe that God is unchangeably consistent; that in dealing with man he is as true to his law as he was before man became disobedient. This being true, the law cannot be so changed, or accommodated in its application to man's conduct, as to keep man from incurring guilt by every disobedient thought, word, and act. Hence, God's unswerving justice and man's hopeless disobedience imperatively demand a Saviour, a Redeemer, just such an one as the Bible declares and describes Jesus Christ to be. Baptists do not believe that

Jesus Christ helps man to save himself; but that he wholly saves, through his own merit and by his own redemptive power. Our people cannot see any merit in a continually disobedient being, which could commend him to an infinitely just Judge who perfectly and constantly upholds and applies the whole, perfect law. But we see infinite merit in Jesus, God's Son, whom we trust alone for pardon and salvation. Hence, to us salvation is entirely by grace (an unmerited gift), through our receiving him as our Prophet, Priest, and King. He is not a partnership Saviour; but a Saviour to the uttermost. (See Rom. 3:24; Heb. 7:25.)

*Justification.* This is a legal term. It refers to God's government. Under his perfect law man has been found guilty and condemned. When, through the merit of Jesus Christ, God's Son, man is pardoned of all sin and accepted by the Father, that man, in the new relation, is acquitted of guilt and stands in Christ, before God, as fully justified as he would have been had he never sinned. Justification means that God does not half-way restore; but that he completely restores to his favor, justifies, those who trust in his Son. Behold what manner of love!

*Regeneration.* Baptists believe that the mys-

terious thing called spiritual life is given to every penitent sinner who trusts himself to the mercy of God in Christ Jesus. With Baptists regeneration does not mean reformation. It means a new creation within. We cannot explain it. We accept it. (John 3: 8.) We believe that such a person is a child of God in a very real sense. Regeneration comes not from man but from the Holy Spirit. It is life, new life, life from above, life begotten in the soul, eternal life. We utterly dissociate it from good works, or human effort. All the good works of a Christian, which are acceptable to God, are the *result* of the new birth and follow it as *an effect*. It produces reformation of the individual. With Baptists regeneration is necessarily the source and cause of all acceptable obedience.

*Sanctification.* Baptists deny, *in toto*, the doctrine that sanctification is a second, instantaneous work in the heart, by which the Holy Spirit is said to destroy all tendency to sin and give the ability to render perfect obedience to God's law. The Bible does not teach it, and we have not observed perfection in those who profess it. We believe sanctification is a progressive work in those who are regenerated, and that everything which chastens and transforms the character and increases right living in the

believer promotes it, being used to this end by the Holy Spirit.

*Perseverance of Saints.* This is a doctrine for which all who believe in salvation by cultivation of character, or by good works, severely criticise us. We do not believe that all who *profess* to be Christians will go to heaven, but that all who are *actually born again* will go there. Good works are evidences of the new birth; but bad lives indicate the lack of regeneration.

In addition to the passages cited in proof of Article XI of the New Hampshire Declaration of Faith, we might give some arguments which logically prove it.

Jesus says, "Likewise, I say unto you that there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth" (Luke 15: 10).

There is no rejoicing in heaven to be followed by chagrin over a victory of Satan in taking a soul away from Jesus Christ. The angels do not rejoice over those who finally go to hell.

A second argument is founded on the nature of the new birth. Is regeneration destroyed and repeated, over and over, as long as a believer lives? Suppose a man is now a regenerated man, born again, a child of God. One act of disobedience on the part of Adam and

Eve resulted in their fall. If this child of God transgresses one of God's commandments and it unregenerates him, destroys in him the spiritual life bestowed by the Holy Spirit, his only hope of restoration is by another new birth. Then, if he violates the "least part" of God's law (James 2:10), he is again unregenerated and ceases to be a child of God. So he would be in and out of God's kingdom and would lose and receive the new birth an indefinite number of times. Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Ye must be born again" (John 3:7), one more time.

But if a transgression does not unregenerate a man, he is still a child of God, though a disobedient child. If he should go to hell there would be a child of God in hell. Children of God do not go to hell. God did not give the world a plan of salvation utterly unsuited to it. If we must live perfectly, after regeneration, in order to retain it, if all the regenerated, except the sinlessly perfect, are continually exposed to hell, then we are a hopeless race and the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross was useless. God's plan of salvation is suited to human beings, not angels. It is perfectly adapted to believers in Christ who intercedes for them now in heaven. (Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25.)

*A Church.* Concerning the church organiza-

tion, let it be remembered that Baptists do not believe in a general church, extending over a vast territory. One congregation, worshipping at one place, is the only church organization described in the New Testament or justified by New Testament teaching. This is mentioned again, because our belief on this point is so widely different from others. Suffice it to record that *every sentence* in the Bible which refers to a church *as an organization, meeting and worshipping and transacting business*, supports the Baptist position. Those little democracies founded by the apostles were the only church organizations in apostolic times. We ought never to have had any other kind.

*Baptism.* There were two ordinances in New Testament churches. They were baptism and the Lord's Supper. Baptists observe them in their churches. They, like all the ordinances of the Old Testament, are symbolical and teach by the manner of their administration. They are declarative and not procurative. All the baptisms of all ages of the world could not blot out the least sin. This is true because the New Testament says, "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7).

It is universally admitted that the ordinances of the Old Testament were symbolical, "could



never take away sin ” (Heb. 10: 4, 11). It is, also, “ not possible ” that baptism or the Lord’s Supper should take away sin.

There is one vital thing about a symbol—it must carry to the mind, by its form, the thing symbolized. The blood flowing from a lamb carried, to the minds of those who observed it, the flowing blood of the Mediator who was to come. Every ceremony and symbol had its lesson. Its value lay in the form of its administration and in nothing else.

There should be only one form called baptism. In fact, there cannot be but one form, because changing the form destroys the symbol.

This principle inheres in all symbolical teaching: *The form of administration sets forth the truth to be taught.* Suppose I say, “ A friend of mine died and went to ” (pointing my finger upward). I do not say where he went. Suppose I say, “ A friend of mine died and went to ” (pointing my finger downward). Still again, I do not say where he went. Suppose I use the same words and point my finger alternately up and down. In every instance I leave it to the position of my hand to declare my meaning. In the first and second instances I would be understood. In the third, by changing the position of my hand, I would utterly confuse my observers,

and there would be no possible way of knowing what I meant.

It is exactly so with baptism. If I read a passage in the New Testament about the burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ and then put a person's body entirely under water and raise it up again I convey to all who observe me the idea of burial and resurrection. I have set forth in that act a picture of the greatest miracle in the world, have taught the greatest doctrine in the world, and called attention to the greatest hope in the world. If an intelligent person thus saw me immerse a man, and saw another person pour a little water on a man's head, and saw still another sprinkle a few drops of water on a man's head, how could he imagine that we were all three doing the same thing! Changing the act utterly destroys the symbol, and it has come to pass that the great meaning and moral dignity of baptism have been destroyed for the average man. Baptists are not responsible for this. We have insisted on one form of baptism, for we know that its meaning lies wholly in the form of its administration, and we cannot consent to the destruction of an ordinance of Jesus Christ. It would be a good exercise in perspicuity if a student should try to frame an English sentence stating more clearly the descrip-

tion of one man immersing another than the description in Acts 8:38.

The word "baptize" is a Greek word, Anglicized, or transferred into the English language. This being true, the English word means what the Greek word meant before the transfer was made. It did not take on a new or different meaning in transit. If a coin is transferred from one bank to another its value is the same, for it is the value which is transferred, represented by the coin.

What then does the Greek word mean? We may find this out from passages in the Greek language where it is used, and from Greek lexicons.

Dr. T. J. Conant, one of the translators of the American version of the New Testament, collected all the passages from the Greek to which lexicographers refer in arriving at their conclusions as to the meaning of this word. He translated those passages into English, and I will give several quotations from his book *Baptizein*, which is regarded as a conclusive argument on this subject:

They say that the Phœnicians who inhabited the so-called Gadeira, sailing four days outside the Pillars of Hercules with an east wind, come to certain desert places full of rushes and seaweed, which when it is ebb-

tide, are not immersed (baptized), but when it is flood-tide are overflowed.—*P. 4, from Aristotle.*

They passed through with difficulty, the foot soldiers immersed (baptized) as far as to the breasts.—*P. 5, from Polybius.*

Alexander happening to be there at the stormy season, and accustomed to trust for the most part to fortune, set forward before the swell subsided, and they marched the whole day in water, immersed (baptized) as far as to the waist.—*P. 6, from Strabo.*

The river, rushing down with the current increased in violence, submerged (baptized) many, and destroyed them attempting to swim through with their armor.—*P. 7, from Diodorus.*

Continually pressing down and immersing (baptizing) him while swimming, as if in sport, they did not desist till they had entirely suffocated him.—*P. 8, from Josephus.*

The ship being just about to be submerged (baptized).—*P. 10, from Josephus.*

And others leaping into the sea were drowned, or, struck by the enemy, were submerged (baptized).—*P. 17, from Dion Cassius.*

We all, therefore, shifted our position to the more elevated parts of the ship, in order that we might lighten that part of the ship that was submerged (baptized).—*P. 25, from Achilles Tatius.*

From many such passages as these the learned author shows in his remarkable book *Baptizein* that the only reasonable translation of the Greek word *baptizo*, when used as to a liquid, is to dip, submerge, or cover completely.

*The Lexicons.* When we want to know the meaning of words we go to the dictionaries. There the primary meaning is given first. The primary meaning is the real meaning of the word and should always be taken, if it is used in its natural, literal sense. In all the passages in the New Testament where it refers to the ordinance of baptism it is used in its primary sense. Let us see what the Greek lexicons say, defining the word referring to this ordinance:

GREEN'S GREEK-ENGLISH LEXICON:

“*Bapto*, to dip.”

“*Baptizo*, to dip, to immerse.”

“*Baptisma*, immersion.”

“*Baptismos*, an act of dipping or immersion, a baptism.”

ANALYTICAL GREEK LEXICON, published by Bagster and Sons, London:

“*Bapto*, to dip, to dye.”

“*Baptizo*, to dip, to immerse.”

“*Baptisma*, immersion, baptism, the ordinance of baptism.”

“*Baptismos*, an act of dipping or immersion, a baptism, an ablution.”

LEXICON IN WESTCOTT AND HORT'S GREEK NEW TESTAMENT:

“*Bapto*, to dip, to dye.”

J. H. THAYER'S GREEK-ENGLISH LEXICON OF THE NEW TESTAMENT:

"*Bapto*, to dip, dip in, immerse, to dip into dye, color."

"*Baptizo*. 1. To dip repeatedly, to immerse, submerge.

"2. To cleanse by dipping, or submerging, to wash, to make clean with water."

"*Baptisma*, immersion, submersion. A word peculiar to the New Testament and ecclesiastical writings."

Herman Cremer, professor of Theology in the University of Griefswald, translation from the German by D. W. Simpson, Ph. D., and William Urwick, M. A.,  
BIBLICO-THEOLOGICAL LEXICON OF NEW TESTAMENT GREEK:

"*Bapto*, to immerse, to make wet by immersion, to dye by dipping.

"*Baptizo*, immerse, submerge. The peculiar New Testament use of the word to denote immersion, submersion for a religious purpose."

LIDDELL AND SCOTT, GREEK-ENGLISH LEXICON (Eighth edition):

"*Bapto*. 1. To dip in water (Lat., *immergere*)."

"2. To dip in dye, to dye."

"*Baptizo*, to dip in or under water."

"*Baptismos*. 1. A dipping in water, ablution."

"2. Baptism."

"*Baptisis*, a dipping, baptism."

All the lexicons agree with these. There are secondary meanings of these words, just as

there are of others, *but even the secondary meanings are never to sprinkle, or pour.* The real meaning is to dip, to submerge, to immerse. Baptist scholarship has won its contention concerning these words with the great scholars of the entire world.

I might quote the admissions of a host of leading Pedobaptists to the fact that the word *baptizo* means primarily to immerse, to dip, to submerge; but I deem it unnecessary in a small book of this kind. John Wesley, Doctor Wall, B. H. Kennedy, Cunningham Geikie, John Calvin, Philip Schaff, and many others have gone on record in their writings that New Testament baptism was by immersion.

The Greek Church should know the meaning of Greek words. That church practises immersion and nothing else. In those countries where the Greek language is used, the churches immerse. Those churches which "baptize" infants immerse them, as they do adults, in Greek-speaking countries.

Baptists must be loyal to Jesus Christ. They must insist that his ordinances be not changed, or their meaning confused or destroyed. This being true, they must contend for baptism as it is in the New Testament, as it was administered to Jesus Christ when he went into the Jordan

River and made a picture-in-action of his burial and resurrection.

*Believers' Baptism.* The New Testament teaches that only those who repent of their sins and believe in Christ are to be baptized. This will appear from the following passages:

Matthew 3: 5, 6; 28: 19, 20; Mark 1: 4, 5; Luke 7: 29; John 4: 1; Acts 2: 41; 8: 12, 36, 37; 10: 47, 48; 18: 8; 22: 16. Read them, and see if all who were baptized were believers.

There is not a single instance of infant baptism in the New Testament. There is no command to baptize any but believers.

It is unreasonable that any practise could be right, according to God's will, which, if it should become universal, would *destroy* a practise that *is commanded*, again and again, in the New Testament. The above scriptures prove, beyond all doubt, that believers should be baptized. If infant baptism is right, then all infants should receive it. But, if *all* infants were baptized, believers' baptism would become obsolete. We would thus have a practise which is plainly taught, destroyed by one which has neither command or example in the word of God. This cannot be right in his sight, and Baptists insist that New Testament baptism shall continue as the only practise of those who would obey him.



The nearest to infant baptism that we can find in the New Testament is where "households" were baptized. There are three instances of this kind. They are as follows:

"And when she [Lydia] was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord come into my house and abide there. And she constrained us" (Acts 16:15).

Note the following facts:

1. Nothing is said of her being married.

2. She was a merchant (ver. 14), and helpers in business were part of the household. See Genesis 18:19 where the helpers, apart from the children, were Abraham's "household." If Lydia's "household" were like Abraham's, it is certain that none of them were children.

3. She said, "my house," and offered the hospitality of the house in such a way as no Eastern woman would do if she had a husband.

But when we read verse 40, of this same chapter, we find that her household were called the "brethren," meaning "believers," which makes it certain that they were not unconscious infants.

The second case is that of the jailer: "And he took them, the same hour of the night, and

washed their stripes, and was baptized, he and all his, straightway" (Acts 16:33).

Again, no *infants* are mentioned. But the jailer was evidently a man of family and was head of the family. That there were no unconscious infants in his family is perfectly clear from the verse immediately preceding this one: "And they spake unto him the word of the Lord and to all that were in his house" (Acts 16:32). They preached to "all" of them the word of God. It is amazing that anybody ever should have failed to see the truth that "all" were old enough to hear the word of the Lord.

The other case is that of Stephanas, mentioned in 1 Corinthians 1:16: "And I baptized also the household of Stephanas." There is no doubt about it; Paul baptized that household. But there is also no doubt about another thing—they were not unconscious infants. Paul tells us about them in this same letter: "Ye know the house of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and that they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints" (1 Cor. 16:15). Unconscious infants could not "addict themselves" to such ministry. So Paul's conduct was in harmony with his teaching that only believers in Christ should be baptized. (Rom. 6:4.)

*Restricted Communion.* There are two views of the Lord's Supper, one or the other of which is held by most people. Some believe that those who sit down together at the Lord's table should agree in fundamental doctrines and have like church fellowship, having professed conversion and been baptized. Others believe that all who profess to be followers of Christ should partake of the Supper together, regardless of doctrines, church-membership, or baptism. The first is called "restricted communion," and the second is called "free communion."

There is only one passage in the New Testament which, by any semblance of a fair interpretation, supports the free communion practise. It is 1 Corinthians 11:12: "But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup." It is contended that the expression "a man" here is a general term and throws the responsibility on the one who proposes to partake of the Supper. According to this interpretation those who administer the ordinance, or those who partake of it, have no right to say who, except themselves, shall come to the Lord's table.

To this contention there are several objections. The first one is that these words were written to the church at Corinth and should not

have a general application. See 1 Corinthians 1:2.

This would appear, also, to be true, because the apostle was giving *special instruction* in this chapter, and this verse is included in those containing such special instruction. See verses 17-30. Since this language is included in the special instruction to that church, it must apply to those only to whom the rest of the passage applies. Three of these verses (23-25) read: "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread; and when he had given thanks he broke it, and said, Take, eat, this is my body, which is broken for you; this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner, also, he took the cup when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me."

So, it is clear that the whole passage in this chapter of Paul's to the church at Corinth is to be interpreted in the light of what the Lord Jesus did; for Paul distinctly declares that he delivered to them what the Lord did on that memorable night. It is unreasonable that Paul would receive instruction from Christ to give to a church that which Christ did and then disre-

gard the thing that he did. The apostle declares that what Christ did was the *basis and example* of the instruction. If his words are to be applied to the church-membership at Corinth, and so to other churches, it is a restricted communion passage, as we shall see later.

Again, if we are to accept an interpretation which throws the doors open to "a man" in the wide, general sense, then infidels, idolaters, and atheists have as good a right to the Lord's table as anybody. This is absurd. It is not only absurd, but it contradicts a number of passages in the Bible. "For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" (2 Cor. 6: 14; see also 1 Cor. 5: 11). This interpretation of verse 28 contradicts the plain meaning of verses 18-20 in this same chapter; because these verses declare that such divisions and heresies, existing among them, in that church vitiated what they did, that their coming together was "not to eat the Lord's Supper," i. e., they could not eat the Lord's Supper in such a divided condition. This being true, it is utterly unreasonable that an occasion where people sit down with no limitation whatever on their divided beliefs could be an observance of the Lord's Supper.

It, also, follows that the practise of professed followers of Christ sitting down together to "commune," when they believe all sorts of *contradictory* doctrines, cannot be in harmony with the Scriptures. Some would believe that baptism is essential to salvation and that immersion only is baptism, while others would believe an entirely different doctrine. Some would believe in the deity of Jesus Christ, while others would deny it. Some would believe in the new birth as a work of the Holy Spirit, while others would believe it to be a personal reformation. In such a bedlam of contentions, such a confusion of doctrines, it is well to go back with Paul to the "same night" in which Jesus was betrayed, and see what he actually instituted as his Supper.

Most denominations teach that baptism must precede the Lord's Supper. This is the doctrine of Presbyterians, Methodists, and, in fact, all of the denominations except the Disciples, who impose no restrictions or limitations whatever, but give the bread and wine to anybody.

Thus Presbyterians, believing that Baptists have been baptized, can invite them consistently, but they know that Baptists who deny that affusion is baptism, cannot on that basis consistently invite Presbyterians.

It is the same with Methodists, Congregationalists, and all other pedobaptists. So far as they are concerned, our "close baptism" consistently demands "close communion" of us. We cannot do otherwise and be consistent on baptism even from their view-point. Their greatest, most scholarly leaders freely admit this and express their appreciation of Baptist consistency. There is One and only One to whom we can go, however, to get unimpeachable instructions concerning this matter. To him we will go. It is always safe to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ on any doctrine or practise.

Fortunately, we have the clear teaching and undisputed example of Jesus Christ on this matter of restricted communion. We freely admit that if all of Christ's professed disciples should come to the Lord's Supper, merely because they make such profession, Baptists are wrong. We would go further and admit that we are wrong if all of his real disciples have a right to the Supper, simply because they are his disciples. If, however, a person should be a disciple, and, in addition thereto, have baptism and similar church fellowship and believe the same fundamental doctrines with the others at that table, then Baptists are right.



*Jesus Christ Instituted Restricted Communion.* We believe nothing less than that in restricting the communion we are following the well-known and *universally acknowledged practise* of the Saviour the "night in which he was betrayed." This claim is based on historical facts. They are facts about which there is *unanimous agreement* among scholars.

All writers on the life of Christ agree that he spent the night before he instituted the Supper in Bethany, and that in the morning he went with his disciples across the Mount of Olives from Bethany to the city of Jerusalem.

There is unanimous agreement, also, that on the way, he sent two of his disciples, Peter and John, on ahead with instructions to look for a certain man who would be carrying a pitcher of water, to follow him and find a place where the Master might take the Paschal meal with his disciples. They would be shown a large, upper room and there they were to make ready. Jesus went into the city and "in the evening" went to that prepared place and "sat down with the twelve apostles." The "twelve" together partook of the Passover, and immediately after the Passover Jesus took bread and wine and instituted the Lord's Supper. These are historical facts about which there is *no disagree-*



*ment among scholars.* Roman and Greek Catholics, Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Methodists, Disciples, Baptists, and all others agree to these facts. See Matthew 26:1-28; Mark 14:1-23; Luke 22:1-19.

No man can make me believe that Mary the mother of Jesus was not, at that time, a saved woman. She was in the city and was at the cross the next morning. She was not invited to that Supper. The man who owned the house in which that Supper was taken was not invited. Lazarus, whom Jesus loved and raised from the dead a few days before that Supper was not invited. His sisters, Mary and Martha, were not invited. Mary Magdalene and the "other Mary" were not invited. Joseph of Arimathea, who within twenty-four hours from that time furnished a tomb for Jesus' body and wrapped it affectionately in fine linen, was not invited. That first Supper was restricted beyond a doubt.

We may not be right in our *reasons* for restricting the invitation, but we are following our Lord's example in restricting it. We believe that he sat down with "the twelve" only, because they formed the nucleus of the church, that organization which being multiplied many thousandfold would fill the earth with his

gospel. *It is a church ordinance.* We surely cannot be wrong in following the example of Christ.

At Troas we find the church came together to "break bread." Paul was there and the missionaries who traveled with him. It was a memorable night. (Acts 20:7-11.) They all believed the same doctrine and had the same church fellowship. Thus they did, and thus we will continue to do with malice toward none, but with love and loyalty for our Lord.

## IV

### CHURCH GOVERNMENT

*Membership.* There are two qualifications for church-membership. The first is regeneration. The other is a sincere desire to cooperate with others of the Lord's people in advancing the cause of Christ. In 2 Timothy 1:12 we have a personal confession of Paul's faith. When we refer back to the time when that great commitment was made we find that he expressed another purpose of his heart also—a surrender for obedient service. He said at that time, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:6). The Lord told him, and he yielded for service at once. Every person who makes such a commitment, with such a desire to do the will of Jesus, is qualified to join the church. These two things are inseparable in the teaching of the word of God.

There has grown up among Baptists too slack a sentiment with reference to the duty of a regenerated person to join a church. We have so stoutly contended that church-membership and the ordinances do not contribute, in the least, to

the salvation of the soul, that we have gone too far toward the other extreme. It is the duty of the saved to join a church, be baptized, and live a life of loyal, devoted service.

We have insisted upon the New Testament doctrine of a converted church-membership, that the unconverted should be kept out, until we have failed to emphasize the doctrine that all the converted should get in. The following and other cogent reasons for uniting with the church should control:

1. If an unconverted person does right by staying out of the church, all who are in the church ought to get out; because, they ought to do right.

2. No one who has trusted Christ has a right to treat Christianity in such a way as would destroy it if everybody else followed his example.

Church houses are standing, Christian literature has been created, a living ministry is supported, and all the means of maintaining and promoting Christianity exist, because some joined the church.

3. Every person ought to make his conduct tell the truth about his heart.

When a person at heart is penitent for sins committed, trusts Jesus Christ as Saviour, and

has a hope from on high, through the Holy Spirit's regenerating power, such a person's outward life ought to proclaim the truth about that blessed heart condition.

4. Every one who has trusted Christ should fight the Lord's battles under the Lord's banner and not attempt to do so under Satan's banner.

In every war the soldiers of each side are organized and under their own banner. Every one who, at heart, belongs to Christ, and desires that Christ's cause shall be victorious, should join the organized forces of Christ, wage a Christian warfare under Christ's banner, and not stay out in the world under the banner which waves over the enemies of his Saviour.

5. The influence of all those who have trusted Christ ought to lead others toward Christ's church and not away from it.

What a shame it is for any regenerated person to use his influence to lead others away from the church of Christ. Surely, no saved person ought to stay out of the church beyond the first opportunity to get in.

6. To attempt to justify staying out of the church by even one argument, or excuse, is to impeach the wisdom of God who gave us the church.

A saved person should utter those words only

which justify God's wisdom. His conduct ought to agree with his words, and he ought to join the church the first opportunity after conversion.

Members moving from one place to another should take letters of commendation from the churches they leave. They should present such letters when asking for fellowship in a church in the community where they intend to reside. When they are received into fellowship the church from which they bear letters should be notified. For this purpose there should be a notification form attached to all church letters.

*How Members Are Received.* There are four ways by which members are received into Baptist churches: By experience, by letter, by statement, and by restoration.

*Experience.* When a person is converted and applies for membership by experience, all concerned should look upon the application as a very important matter. Often it is too lightly regarded. It means that the applicant is taking one of the most important steps of his entire life. He desires to separate himself from worldlings and be, henceforth, among the people of God, cooperating with them in promoting the kingdom of God on earth. If his experience of grace is genuine, there has come to him the

greatest blessing heaven ever bestows on a human being—the soul's salvation. If it is not genuine, if he is deceived and acting too hastily, he ought to know the truth about it and be led to wait until he genuinely trusts in Christ. If one is trying to deceive the church his wicked purpose ought to be detected.

An application for membership, therefore, puts great responsibility upon the church. Every member should realize it. According to the New Testament the church-members receive or reject. Some pastors take the matter into their own hands and assume the entire responsibility of rushing the application through. Some pastors do not ask the applicant a single question eliciting any evidence whatever of a change of heart so the church may act intelligently. Such a practise is reprehensible in the extreme. No member of any Baptist church ought to permit his pastor to rush people this way into the church. The church, all the members present, should be regarded in such an important transaction.

The applicant may stand and tell the church his experience that all may hear. It is entirely proper for the pastor, or whoever is in charge, to ask questions, bringing out in the hearing of the church the evidence of regeneration, that all

may understand and be able to decide intelligently whether the applicant should be received or rejected. There should be no haste, carelessness, or even a seeming desire to dispose of the matter without due consideration.

The experience, either told or elicited in answers to questions, should show that the applicant realized that he had done wrong in the sight of God, and that God had, therefore, condemned his conduct; that he had asked forgiveness and committed his soul's salvation to Jesus Christ, believing Christ's promise to pardon and save. This simple experience is a Christian experience, and whoever has it is saved. He who lacks it should not be received into any church. It meets all the requirements of 2 Timothy 1:12; Acts 16:30-33; John 3:16; 5:24, and all the other passages in the New Testament which bear upon the subject.

When the facts are brought out before the church, the question should be put to a vote of the membership. It should be in about this form:

"So many as are in favor of receiving this applicant for membership by experience, let it be known by raising your right hands [or saying, 'Aye']."

"Those who are opposed may state your objection."



If there is no objection, the applicant is received; and, after baptism, is a member of the church with all the privileges and obligations of membership.

Some have questioned the Scriptural authority for requiring the relation of a Christian experience and for voting upon an application.

It is strange that such objections should be raised by any person acquainted with the New Testament. We have two very clear examples, for requiring an experience before baptism. (See Matt. 3: 7, 8.) John was baptizing in the river of Jordan, and many were applying for the ordinance. Among those who came were many Pharisees and Sadducees. He refused to baptize them. A very little knowledge of those two groups will clearly reveal why he refused, and also the fact that his refusal was on exactly the same grounds a Baptist church would refuse the ordinance to an unconverted applicant now. The Pharisees were self-righteous. Their fundamental doctrine was salvation by culture of character, personal righteousness, good works of their own. Holding such a doctrine they trusted themselves, endeavored to establish their own righteousness, and did not submit themselves to the righteousness of God. (See Rom. 10: 1-4.) Having no Christian ex-

perience, not having repented of wrong-doing, but asserting their own right-doing, not trusting the power or merit of the Mediator but their own merit, John refused to baptize them.

The Sadducees were materialists, did not believe in immortal souls and a hereafter. To them there was no inner, living spirit to be judged, condemned, or pardoned. But salvation is for the spirit, not the material body, for heaven in the hereafter, not for gain in the present. So, manifestly, they were not proper subjects for baptism. Hence, John refused them the ordinance until they gave evidence that they were changed in mind and heart. Baptists follow his example.

Some think that John's expression, "Bring forth, therefore, fruits meet for repentance" (Matt. 3: 8), required them to go home and live so as to show that they had repented. Such was not the case; because he could not follow all of them to their homes and observe their conduct. He meant for them to give him "fruits" in evidence, sincere, credible proof, by personal testimony, there and then. Baptists should so guard the ordinances and church-membership until the Master returns to earth.

Another outstanding example is in point. The church was the one in Jerusalem. 'The

applicant was Saul of Tarsus, gloriously converted. After his conversion he was baptized in Damascus; but being compelled to leave that city on account of persecution, he spent three years in Arabia. He returned to Damascus, was driven out again, went to Jerusalem, and attempted to join the church there. They did not believe the statement he made, and refused to receive him. Barnabas intervened and inspired such confidence in the apostles concerning Saul that he was then received. (Acts 9: 26-28.)

*Received by Letter.* The whole matter of church letters is muddled in the minds of many Baptists. Many churches could greatly improve their practise by the least effort to get into harmony with New Testament teaching on this subject. There is only one passage in the Bible on this matter; but it is perfectly clear. If we follow that passage and ignore completely the way human organizations, such as lodges, transfer or dismiss members, we will have no trouble whatever about it. Here is the single passage:

And when he [Apollos] was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which believed through grace (Acts 18: 27).

Let us note the following things about this passage:

1. It applies to all church-members going from one church to another.

2. It is the only passage in the New Testament bearing at all upon church letters.

3. It is so simple that no other instruction is needed.

4. The words "brethren" and "disciples" are both used in many places meaning the entire church as an organization. So the letter was from the "brethren" collectively, the entire church at Corinth.

5. The "disciples" were to "receive him," i. e., into their group fellowship, their church, as a fellow worker.

6. The letter was not written to Apollos but to the church in Corinth. He did not need to have his church at Ephesus inform him, by letter, what he knew as well as the rest of them; viz., that he was a member there in good standing.

7. He did not consider that the church letter was his; but that he was the bearer of the letter to those to whom it was addressed. There are few things in life more amazing to a sane man than the fact that as soon as a Baptist church intrusts a letter to a member, that member con-

siders the letter his own. If a mail-carrier should take such a notion, he would either be sent to prison or an asylum. The only reason that sane Baptists have ever taken such a position is that they disregard the New Testament. Apollos was simply a letter-carrier from one church to another. So is every Baptist who obeys the New Testament. This has always been the Baptist position.

8. Apollos delivered the letter faithfully and immediately. It is probable that no thought of delaying its delivery entered his mind for one second. He would have considered such delay as mistreating the church at Ephesus, which had written the good letter about him, thus proving himself unworthy of what the letter contained, and, also, mistreating the church at Corinth.

9. The letter was not written especially for the benefit of either the church at Ephesus or Corinth (in Achaia) ; but for Apollos. It was a kindness to him, and he appreciated it. It gave him a favorable introduction into another community, gained friends for him at once, and gave him an opportunity to work for Christ.

10. Apollos at once, in the new field, went to work for the Master. He lost no time. It should be so with all who love our Lord.

Baptist church letters are not dismissal cards. They do not at once change the relation of a member to the church granting the letter. He is still Scripturally and logically a member of that church in every sense of the word, until he delivers the letter of commendation to another church. He is under its discipline, obligated to support it with his influence and his means, has all the rights, privileges, duties, and obligations of any other member. Many Baptist churches have departed, in practise, from this fundamental truth. Some churches use "*letters of dismissal*" as a convenient way of getting rid of undesirable members; and some backslidden members "take their letter" in order to feel free to ignore their obligations to Christ and the church. The result of this unscriptural laxness is the invention of various plans to deal with "absentee members." The way to deal with them is to get back to the Bible, treat all as members who deserve it and respect the church. Put the names of all others, simply as a matter of record, on a list of "Non-affiliated" and go on doing the Master's work without them.

So great an organization as the church, the force in the world which gives mankind the gospel with all of its benefits, should be kind in

its treatment of its members; but it should demand consideration and respect from all who have their names on its roll.

*Received by Statement.* Members may be received on their statements when, for any good reason, it is impossible to secure letters. Sometimes a church disbands, or fails to have meetings. In such cases its members may be received into other churches on a statement of the facts. Sometimes members backslide for years. Their names are erased, and they lose their membership. When such persons are revived and desire to become active in the Master's service, they may state the fact to a Baptist church and be received into its fellowship on such statement. It is proper in all such cases to notify the church where the person formerly held active membership that the backslider has been reclaimed and has united with a church acquainted with the fact of his spiritual restoration. Some churches certify such reclamation to the other church, requesting restoration to fellowship and a letter of commendation. Either course is proper, provided the former church has such notification. But the fact is that the receiving church assumes the responsibility of extending fellowship on its own knowledge of the reclamation and not on a letter from the



other church. Hence, it is only necessary that notification be given.

Sometimes members who travel, or propose to reside temporarily in a place, take letters from their churches, introducing and commending them. Such letters are read publicly to the churches where such members go, merely as a matter of introduction, and are returned to the holders. No record is made on the roll in such case. All parties understand that membership still remains with the churches giving the letters of introduction, and those thus commended are under every obligation to support their churches while temporarily absent.

*Restoration.* When fellowship has been withdrawn from a member, and he desires to come back, he applies for membership "by restoration." In such case he acknowledges the justice of his exclusion, justifies the excluding church in its action, and expresses repentance for his misdeeds.

Two things should be borne in mind by all parties concerned: 1. The church excluding a member should stand ready, willing, and anxious to forgive and restore, whenever proper acknowledgments are made, with sincere repentance. The excluded member should know this by the treatment he receives from the mem-



bers after his exclusion. He should know that they are praying for his restoration. There should be no bitterness but Christian love for him. It is proper for public prayer to be offered for a man just after his exclusion.

2. At the same time, the church should be just. No view of mercy should prompt any desire to restore without repentance. Paul's teaching on these points is very clear. In 1 Corinthians 5 : 1, 6, he very plainly says that an offender should be cut loose from the church and delivered over to Satan, if he insists on serving Satan. But in 2 Corinthians 2:6-8, Paul presumably mentioned this man again and wrote: "Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many. So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him and comfort him, lest perhaps such an one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow; wherefore, I beseech you that ye would confirm your love towards him." The offense was disgraceful. He had taken his stepmother away from his own father; but no reference was made to it by Paul after the repentance was deep and genuine in the offender's heart. The duty of the church, yes, more than a duty, its privilege is to restore such a penitent returning to the path of obedience. (Gal. 6 : 1.)

Dr. J. M. Pendleton takes the position, in his *Church Manual*, that in such cases no amount of sorrow and no degree of repentance should keep the church from withdrawing fellowship. I do not agree with this view. While the church should be just to condemn sin and have no fellowship for it, there is no limit to mercy in case of sincere, deep, and sorrowful repentance. If an offender sincerely repents he should not be excluded; if he repents, after exclusion, he should be restored.

## V

### CHURCH OFFICERS

A CHURCH may exist without officers, but it cannot do the work a church is organized to accomplish. A body of persons, baptized on a profession of faith in Christ, believing what he taught, and united in the purpose to obey what he commanded, is a church. When such a group organizes for that holy purpose it is then competent to elect its officers. They are not appointed; they are elected. The church, proceeding with this matter, acts as a pure democracy, every member having a voice and all equal with each other.

In New Testament churches there were two kinds of officers: those who ministered spiritual things and those who ministered temporal things, hence, pastors and deacons. All the pastors were preachers. None of the deacons were preachers. The practise of making deacons an order of the preaching ministry is unscriptural. Preachers are called "elders," "evangelists," "pastors," "bishops," but these terms do not mean different orders in authority or official

rank. They mean the same class of men, equal officially, but performing different duties. The writer of this Manual has been at different times pastor, evangelist, denominational secretary, editor, and teacher of the Bible; but all the time he has occupied one office as a minister, an elder, or minister of the Word. A friend of mine has been a deacon over forty years. He has never been a preacher. This is in completest harmony with the New Testament. The two offices are in two realms; one is spiritual and has to do with spiritual things, the other is temporal and has to do with material things, such as getting food and clothing for the poor and financing the work of the church.

*The Pastor.* The word "pastor" is Latin and means "a shepherd." Its Greek equivalent is *episcopos*, translated "bishop." There is no distinction in the New Testament between these two words. They are used *interchangeably*. The use of the word "bishop" as applying to a superior order of the ministry, a preacher elevated above others, having authority over them, is utterly unscriptural. It is contradicted and prohibited by the Master in Matthew 20:25-28:

But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the gentiles exercise dominion over them [i. e., over the common people], and they that are

great exercise authority upon them [i. e., over the princes]. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister [Greek, "servant"]; and whosoever will be chief among you let him be your servant [Greek, "bond-slave"]: even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

This passage teaches that difference in the honor bestowed by the church should not be according to difference in official position, but according to the amount and value of the service personally rendered. The law here laid down is far-reaching and would transform social values if it were obeyed by men and women everywhere. The law is: **GIVE HONORS ACCORDING TO UNSELFISH SERVICE; NOT ACCORDING TO BIRTH OR OFFICIAL POSITION.**

The pastor should be elected by the church. He may be a member of that church or of some other Baptist church. If he is not an ordained minister the church should take steps to have him ordained. Only ordained ministers should administer the ordinances.

He should remember that he occupies an *official* position in the church. "This is a true saying: If a man desire the *office* of a bishop

[Latin, *pastor*] he desireth a good work" (1 Tim. 3: 1). As an office, it has its official duties. These should be understood and faithfully performed. No man's desire should be for the office, but for the *work*, the good work which the office gives him an opportunity to do. There is such a thing as orthodoxy of conduct as well as orthodoxy of belief. The pastor should have both.

The pastor should look after the spiritual needs of the church which honors him by electing him to this high and responsible office. Maybe the church is small. Let him remember that his Master spent his ministerial life training twelve men and that one of them was a hypocrite and failed to take the training. A pastor should thank God, from a sincere heart, for the privilege of being pastor of eleven members in a church. He should give them the Word both publicly and privately, stirring up in them a keen appetite for the bread of truth and serving it to them in a helpful, attractive, and interesting way. He should set before them the value of godliness, in the present life and in that which is to come. He should live before them in such a way, day by day, that all men would acknowledge him to be a good, religious man. He should not go in debt, nor be a lover

of money. He should be blameless in his attitude toward women and never abuse the confidence of men. He should be as narrow in his beliefs as the truth and as broad in his sympathies as needy, erring, suffering humanity. His office calls for the highest, noblest, and best in human attainment, and he should endeavor, every day, to show his community what a Christian shepherd should be.

The pastor should be a student of men and books. He should know the people intimately and enter into their life purposes and aspirations. He should study ways to serve them intellectually, socially, materially, and spiritually. He should take an interest in all that they do, their business success, their entertainment, their general welfare. Nothing which affects the people should escape his interest and watchful care.

He should comfort the sorrowing, help the poor and needy, seek to assist the unemployed, warn the careless, and help the prosperous in their efforts to be spiritual. When death enters a home, his should be the most consoling words. When financial disaster falls on a family, he should show them that life is more than gain, and lead them to appreciate what they have left, show that it is worth more than money.

Above all things, the pastor should know his Bible. He should be familiar with every doctrine, promise, warning, and practical lesson. It should be his lifelong study and become more vital to him all the time.

In addition to a knowledge of the Bible, a pastor should be well informed concerning general matters. He should buy and read good books, keeping abreast of the times in which he lives. The pastor should gather a well-selected library. His people should show their appreciation by giving him books. Birthdays, anniversaries, Christmas, and other special occasions should enrich the pastor's library. There is no gift a sincere pastor would rather have than a good book.

The habit of systematic study should be formed early in a preacher's life and faithfully adhered to as long as he lives. It is remarkable how much a man can read in twenty-five years by reading fifty pages every day—371,250 pages, or 1,856 volumes of 200 pages each. These books, if one inch thick, would fill thirty-eight shelves, each four feet long. This amount of reading would acquaint a man with the best of literature, history, philosophy, theology, and science, and keep him abreast of important, current events. Such a fund of knowledge could



not fail to be most helpful to the people served by such a pastor.

*Deacons.* The other office in the New Testament churches was that of deacon. It was made necessary by the increase of membership in the church at Jerusalem and the consequent temporal needs of the organization. Under the extraordinary conditions which prevailed it was thought wise by members of that church to sell their property, and put the proceeds into a common treasury. This was not done by any other church. Those who were in need drew from this treasury as their necessities required.

Under such an arrangement widows would be beneficiaries of such a fund. Distribution was made daily by the preachers, the apostles, and it took their time from the spiritual service they were chiefly to render. Dissatisfaction developed in the membership of the church. We have the account of it in Acts 6:1-7.

The demand for the service called for the office. Only those who will do the work should be chosen as deacons. When any man ceases to serve he should be retired.

The deacons were assistants to the preachers, taking part of the work, relieving them, so that they could have time and strength for the minis-

try of the word and prayer. Some take the position that a pastor should not have anything to do with the financial, or material, affairs of the church. They hold that such matters are outside of his rightful sphere. They claim that the deacons *have* a right to manage all such matters and that the pastors *meddle in things which do not rightfully concern them* when they plan, or look after, church finances, property, resources, and expenditures.

This position is not Scriptural. The preachers, primarily, had all such matters in their hands. The deacons were chosen to *relieve them of the burden of administration*. Had those seven men neglected to do their work, the duty of relieving needy widows would still have been upon the preachers. So it is with pastors of churches now. They are the overseers of the organization, the deacons are elected to assist in temporal matters; but this does not create a new and possibly conflicting sphere of activity. The pastors are still, primarily, responsible, and they must see that the service is rendered by the deacons in such a way as promotes the welfare of the organization.

The qualifications of deacons are stated explicitly and will bear earnest consideration. They were required to be: (a) honest, and hav-

ing reputations for honesty; (b) spiritual, full of the Holy Spirit; (c) wise, men of prudence in their dealing with others.

What a trinity of excellencies! Surely, pastors with such helpers may confidently give themselves continually to prayer and the ministry of the word. The material side will be safe and the spiritual side will not suffer from the prudent conduct of such men. No wonder "the word of the Lord increased, and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly."

It is recorded that those seven men were ordained by prayer and the laying on of hands by the preachers, the apostles. Two things may be said concerning this:

1. When a Scriptural office is perpetuated the Scriptural mode of induction into the office should be continued. Moses received from Jehovah instructions for setting apart Aaron and his sons as priests. That ceremony was continued to the end of the Levitical priesthood. So should it be with deacons. It is unscriptural for men to serve in the office who have not been thus set apart.

2. Only the preachers did the ordaining. There has grown up an almost universal practise, among Baptists, of inviting deacons to be

members of presbyteries to ordain deacons and even preachers. Such practise has no Scriptural support. It ought to be discontinued. Nowhere in the New Testament was a deacon called a presbyter. The two Greek words translated "deacon" and "presbyter" are wholly different. Any custom which gives any support whatever to the notion that deacons are presbyters, should not exist among those to whom the New Testament is the only book of authoritative church discipline and laws.

The duties of deacons are not specifically laid down in the New Testament. We have their qualifications stated, but their duties are left to the requirements of conditions in the churches. They are to be ASSISTANTS TO THE PREACHERS IN ALL THOSE THINGS WHICH, IF ATTENDED TO BY PREACHERS, WOULD HINDER THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD.

Guided by this single rule it is not difficult to find a large, most appropriate, and most useful field for deacons.

It is not at all improper for the deacons of a church, together with the pastor, and if desirable, with the other leaders in the various departments of the church's work, to get in order beforehand the matters to come before

the church in its business meetings, to the end that all may be transacted with dispatch and proper consideration. This is especially true in a large church, carrying on a number of lines of church activity. It is for the good of all the work, and should be pleasing to all the members, that each item is thus given careful and wise consideration. This can best be done by a smaller group than a whole church of hundreds or thousands of members. Democracy does not mean a lack of wise leadership. The principles of democracy do not demand that the whole body shall act on important, perhaps vital, matters, which have not been carefully thought and prayed through. We have full authority for such previous consideration being given to important business. (See Acts 9:27; Gal. 2:2.)

Let us, however, keep in mind the fact that deacons and others, thus meeting, are not managers of the church. All matters considered and passed upon by them are to be submitted to the whole church, assembled together, and finally *decided by the whole church*. Deacons can only recommend, with propriety, and the church must bear the responsibility of final decision and action. Otherwise, democracy is soon destroyed in a church.

The deacons, in such previous meetings, are

simply serving the church; helping to find the wise course to take, the best thing to be done. If a church refuses to adopt the recommendations of the deacons, it acts within its Scriptural rights. In such a case the deacons should not feel that their wisdom has been slighted or their authority set at naught. The church simply prefers the wisdom of all the members, together with the deacons, in the church meeting, to the wisdom of the deacons by themselves. As for *authority*, the deacons have none. They are never to try to *control* the church but to *assist* the church by their counsel.

The deacons were to "serve tables," i. e., to look after temporal, material needs. Dr. J. M. Pendleton well said: "There are three tables for them to serve: (1) The table of the poor. (2) The table of the Lord. (3) The table of the pastor." It logically *follows* that the finances necessary for such service are to be furnished by the church, and that the deacons should promote such means of enlistment and securing of funds as may be effective in providing for the Lord's treasury.

Deacons should be ordained for life. It does not follow from this that they should serve actively in any church, merely because they are ordained. In many churches there are a num-

ber of ordained ministers, but only one pastor. The other ordained ministers are officially qualified to serve as pastor, and any one of them may do so when elected to the position by the church. So, deacons going from one church to another, may be called into active, official service, or not, as the receiving church desires. When deacons become inactive through old age they may be put on an "honorary" list at their request.

The pastor and deacons are related as mutual helpers. How out of place, therefore, are the slurs often thrown at deacons by preachers in their public speeches! Surely such a pastor lacks consideration, not only for the church of Christ, but for those who supply his table and look after the welfare of his family. On the other hand, deacons should remember that theirs is not the main office or work. They are assistants, helpers toward the main, great task of giving the bread of life to a starving world.

They should assist the pastor in the administration of the Lord's Supper, preparing all things necessary for its proper observance. They should dispense the charities of the church and see that the poor, especially the poor of the church, are cared for. They should assist in all



the work of enlistment, discipline, education, missions, providing houses and equipment for the church's work; in fact, in doing whatever is necessary in promoting the Redeemer's cause in all the earth.

*Other Officers.* In a well-organized church there are other officers which should have consideration here. There should be a clerk, or secretary, in every church. This officer should keep an accurate roll of the membership, minutes of all meetings, and make up reports for associations and other denominational organizations in which the church cooperates. He should write a legible hand and be able to state in clear, concise language what is done by the church in its meetings. He is writing the history, month by month, of that church. How often has valuable history been lost through the indifference or carelessness of church clerks! It is a very important office, and its duties should be performed with scrupulous care.

*Treasurer.* The treasurer should have charge of the funds of the church. He should keep his books as accurately as a bookkeeper in a bank. He should insist that a capable and competent auditor, or auditing committee, should audit his books and accounts annually, or oftener. No church treasurer should be satisfied for his



books to go unaudited. The auditor's certificate is his protection against all gainsayers, or critics.

Neither he nor the deacons should disburse any amount, however, small or large, for any purpose, object, or interest for which it was not given. Deacons and treasurers are not handling their own money and should not take the least liberty with funds in their hands. Good intentions and honest motives can never justify shifting or misappropriation of funds given by others. The treasurer should be able, at all times, to give an accounting of the funds of the church. He should make financial reports as often as the church requires; preferably at every business meeting.

*Trustees.* These officers simply hold the titles to church property. They are needed only because of State laws. They have no right to buy, sell, or dispose of property belonging to the church; but when it orders a purchase, sale, or transfer, the trustees should execute all necessary, legal papers in the name of the church and by its authority. The church may authorize either the deacons or the trustees to insure the property, or do anything else appertaining to it; but in the absence of church action, giving instructions and authority, the trustees are

simply custodians of titles and papers while the deacons are custodians of the property.

The practise of some trustees of employing pastors and fixing their salaries is not only unscriptural but contrary to the principles and form of New Testament church government.

## VI

### CHURCH DISCIPLINE

EVERY organization which continues and develops strength to accomplish the purpose of its being must maintain an orderly discipline. An army without discipline is at the mercy of the enemy. A nation without practical patriotism producing a law-abiding citizenship is at the mercy of the advocates of anarchy. A school without discipline trains its students in lawlessness. A church must maintain discipline or be held in contempt both by the lovers of righteousness and the promoters of evil. Hence Paul wrote, "Let all things be done decently and in order" (1 Cor. 14: 40; see also Eph. 4: 11, 12; 1 Cor. 14: 33; Titus 1: 5; 1 Cor. 12: 12-23). All the apostles constantly taught the churches the value of good order and how to maintain it.

To prevent disorder and worldliness on the one hand, and keep from turning the business meetings of a church into trial-court scenes on the other, requires wise management and a high

degree of statesmanship. Both extremes should be avoided as if they were pestilences.

Constructive, spiritual preaching is the best means of church discipline. The best way to combat disease is by keeping the body full of red, healthy blood, and the best way to combat worldliness in a church is by maintaining earnest spirituality in all the departments of its work.

There are two kinds of discipline: (1) Formative and (2) corrective.

Of these two kinds of discipline, the first is vastly more important. The word means "giving shape to: tending to mold that which is plastic or pliable." When a church molds the pliable lives of its members into full-grown men and women in Christ it is accomplishing its best discipline for them.

All the departments of the church should be conducted so as to mold the workers into better, stronger church-members. The Sunday Bible school, the young people's organizations, the Missionary Union, the men's Brotherhood, all the organizations which instruct, train, and keep active the members of the church help along this formative discipline.

That pastor is wise who hunts worthy tasks for his people. When a member gets to the

place where he has a partnership-consciousness with foreign and home missionaries, evangelists, and those who manage or promote Christian institutions, that member will have little place in his heart for worldliness and little time for wrong-doing.

*Corrective discipline* is that which a church administers to those who violate their solemn covenant and commit sin, to the hurt of other members or the cause of Christ.

There are two kinds of offenses recognized in the New Testament — *personal* and *general offenses*. They require different methods of dealing.

The good that any church does in any community depends very largely upon the favorable esteem in which it is held by the people on the outside. The words of Paul to Timothy concerning a bishop, pastor, apply with perhaps greater force to the church organization: "Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil" (1 Tim. 3: 7). The members of a church should, therefore, avoid public scandal which would hurt the standing of the church in its community.

*Personal Offenses.* It was doubtless for this reason that the Master gave directions for set-

ting personal differences between members of a church. His law is found in Matthew 18: 15-22.

From this passage we learn:

1. Sin is both against God and an individual when it injures that individual.

2. When the sin, or injury, is personal and private the injured should go at once (the "go" is imperative) to the one who has done the injury, and show him his fault. It is never best to write him about it. The word "show" does not mean to upbraid him, but to lay the case before him in all possible clearness, so that he may see the wrong he has done.

3. In connection with this passage it is well to consider, also, the duty of one who has reason to believe that a brother has been injured by him and is offended at him. We find the law of Jesus for such cases in Matthew 5: 23, 24.

This is also to be a very private matter between the two. It is taken from the synagogue, or temple, worship as an illustration of the duty of a sincere worshiper. The connection of the gift with the worship is natural, for in all of the Old Testament the financial support of the priesthood, the teachers of religion, was inseparably connected with the act of worship. Such support proved the sincerity of the heart.

A worship that did not cost the worshiper anything was considered insincere.

How wholesome this teaching is! To follow what the Master says would cover a multitude of sins.

4. If the injured goes to the one doing the injury, and that one sees his fault and repents of it, the injured party should immediately and fully forgive him. Then the matter would end.

5. But if the one doing the injury will not see and acknowledge his fault, or repent of it, a second step is to be taken.

Up to this time the utmost privacy has been maintained, in the hope that the wrong-doing might not become known and injure the church, or the wrong-doer, in the eyes of others. When such private effort at supporting righteousness fails, then the injured party is commanded to get one or two others to go with him to the offender. They should, of course, be prudent, good men; not relatives, or partisans of the one requesting their service; but men loving truth and right, whose testimony would stand if offered by him. Their duty would evidently be twofold: To assist in getting the offender to acknowledge his wrong and make amends; and secondly, to testify before the church concerning the case and the conduct of the parties

at variance, if it should be brought to the church.

In the administration of justice among the Jews the testimony of the accused was allowed on behalf of himself, to offset the testimony of any witness who might be against him; hence, the saying, "One witness is no witness." It was, therefore, necessary to have two or three witnesses for the prosecution in order to convict. So, if the matter was to be brought before the church, one or two others were necessary as witnesses, for surely no church should be less fair than a Jewish court.

6. When the injured party fails to get a personal reconciliation, and when he fails to get a reconciliation by taking one or two others with him, it becomes his duty to take it to the church. This should be done at a regular meeting of the church. The effort to prevent the harm that might be done by making the matter public is altogether praiseworthy, and it should keep all of the parties from talking about the case to others, before it is made public by bringing it to the church. However, when a public trial is the only thing that can secure justice, it ought to be had in an orderly, proper way.

The charges should be clear and explicit, the testimony presented fairly, and everything done



for the purpose of promoting justice and righteousness. If the parties concerned show animosity toward each other, their spirit should not be shared by the church. All the members whose duty it is to pass upon the case should maintain a judicial attitude, be as impartial as jurors or judges; not regarding the person or condition of either party to the contention. Every member should try earnestly to reach a just, fair, and impartial decision on the merits of the case, having in view only the triumph of truth and justice. If the truth prevails, it will work out, finally, for the good of the church and all concerned.

7. If the offending party will hear the church and yield to the decision of the members assembled, there should be a complete, immediate reconciliation. Apologies should be offered, or restitution made, and the injured party should forgive heartily, sincerely, and publicly, at once. If such should be the happy termination of the affair, all the members of the church should assure the wrong-doer of their sincere fellowship and prayers for his future spiritual prosperity.

8. But if he will not hear the church and do right, then fellowship should be withdrawn from him, and he should be regarded the same

as an outsider who never had any connection with the church whatever. The language of Jesus is clear and strong on this point. When one is excluded from the fellowship of a church, it is disloyalty to Jesus Christ and the church for any of the members to extend such comfort and sympathy as would minify or alleviate the effect of the exclusion. He should be treated as an outsider in every sense. Of course, he should be made to feel that the church would immediately forgive him if he repented and desired to return to the church in the proper way.

*General Offenses.* A general offense is one which is of such a character that the cause of Christ is injured in such a manner that it becomes the duty of the church, as a body, to deal with the offender.

General offenses may include denial of the fundamental doctrines of the Bible, violation of one or more of the Ten Commandments, or the laws of the country, and disturbing the harmony and peace of the church.

Two things should be kept in mind when dealing with persons accused of a general offense: One is that the accused should be saved, if possible, to the church and righteousness; the other is that the good name and standing of the church must be preserved.

To an extent the principle of private, fraternal treatment laid down by the Master, in dealing with personal offenses, should govern when a member is accused of a general offense. It is against the church and, therefore, against every member. Hence, the pastor, deacons, or any member of the church may endeavor, with propriety to reclaim the one going astray. It is their duty to do so. There should be the most earnest effort put forth to save the erring member.

In doctrinal matters very few people go very far wrong all at once. They usually drift into heresy. Their drifting may be observed by the other members. It should cause concern and sincere grief. The spiritually minded should undertake to restore such in the spirit of meekness. (Gal. 6:1; 2 Tim. 2:25.) They should go to him and admonish him and endeavor in all Christian love to show him the truth.

If efforts do not avail, if he persists in the heretical beliefs and becomes an opposer of the power and influence of the truth, the church must cut loose from him. "A heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject." However, we should learn the lesson from modern surgery that the main effort should be to save and not destroy. Too many surgeons and too many

churches have been hasty in performing operations on members of the body. Of course, good surgery removes the offending member when it endangers the life or permanent health of the body, and good church discipline acts the same way; but courageous sanity instead of nervous haste should guide.

In dealing with general offenses there should be such fairness and Christian consideration shown the accused that all reasonable people would justify the church in its course. Haste and unwise management of the case often produce factional feelings hurtful to the harmony and fellowship of other members. This should be avoided, if possible. There should be much earnest prayer. The spirit of Christ should prevail all through.

If all efforts to reclaim the offending member fail, charges should be brought against him in the church. They should state specifically and clearly his offense, and he should be given a copy of them. A general charge such as "un-christian conduct," or "conduct unbecoming a Christian," or "covenant-breaking," is not sufficient. The general charge may be made, and then the particulars set out; but the accusation should be specific. There should be a time set for trial and the accused member should be

given every reasonable opportunity to establish his innocence. The church should rejoice if he is able to prove himself innocent. If, on the other hand, he is not able to do so, or if he defies the church, or attempts to dominate the situation and treat the church with contempt, the membership, in sorrow but in fidelity to the truth and justice, must withdraw fellowship from him, regardless of consequences.

Sometimes when a member on trial sees that he is found out and his guilt is going to be established, he becomes penitent, confesses, and asks forgiveness. Such confessions are seldom sincere. The members should endeavor not to be swept off of their feet at such a time. There is a wide-spread impression that "when confession is made the church has to forgive." Such is not the case. The church should exercise due caution. When the repentance is evidently sincere and the member on trial admits his guilt and humbly promises to live right if forgiven by the church, then the church may forgive; but there is no compulsion on its part to do so. If the members have any doubt of his sincerity and the genuineness of his repentance, they may very consistently refuse forgiveness at that time. It is altogether proper to stop proceedings and give the accused time to show his re-

penitance, at least for a month or two. If then he shows by a consistent life that he was sincere in his promise to amend, the church should forgive fully and joyfully. Dr. J. M. Pendleton, in his *Church Manual*, pp. 141, 142, advocated immediate exclusion, without trial, of those accused of offenses of an infamous or scandalous character. I cannot agree with him. It seems to me that a church should be as considerate of an accused person as our courts are of those accused of crimes against the civil government. It would appear, also, that the more serious the accusation the more harm might be done the accused if he were innocent. Furthermore, an amount of evidence that would justify exclusion *without trial*, would certainly *convict in a trial* and fully sustain the church in excluding the offender. 1 Corinthians 5: 1, 5, cited by Doctor Pendleton, does not sustain his position. It does not say that the Corinthian church should take such drastic action without taking proper steps to prove what was "reported." Every man is entitled to a fair and impartial trial by any organization of which he is a member. The Bible is just; but it is merciful even to the greatest sinners.

In the trial of a member the proceedings should be orderly and calculated to obtain jus-

tice. The church should attend to its own business in its own way. Bringing in attorneys, or court-stenographers, or anything that would influence the members in either eliciting and considering the facts, or their decision in the case, should not be tolerated by a church.

The proceedings should be about as follows:

1. The church should be in its business meeting with moderator and clerk present ready to proceed in an orderly way.

2. The accused should have had due notice and an opportunity to be present.

3. If he is not present and no one knows of providential hindrances the records in the case should be read by the clerk and the evidence to sustain the charges submitted. Then, if the church deems the evidence sufficient to sustain the charges, fellowship should be withdrawn and a proper record made. If the church does not deem the evidence sufficient to sustain the charges, the case should be dismissed.

4. If the accused is present, the clerk will read the record thus far in the case, including the charges, and the accused will have an opportunity to make his answer. If he says that he is not guilty of the accusation, the church will present the evidence it has in support of the charges. The accused will then present his side



of the case and introduce evidence supporting him.

5. After all the evidence is submitted and explained so that it is understood by the membership, a vote of the church is taken on the question "Shall the charges be sustained?"

6. If a majority votes in the affirmative the moderator declares the charges sustained. If a majority votes in the negative, the moderator declares that the charges are not sustained and the case is dismissed.

7. If the charges are sustained, it is then in order to have a motion to withdraw fellowship. Such a motion should be passed by a unanimous vote. If a minority votes in the negative, they should be asked if they will be reconciled to the exclusion of the accused. If they reply that they will not be reconciled, then the church should withdraw fellowship from them. If, on the other hand, they will be reconciled to the exclusion of the accused, such an agreement on their part should be satisfactory to the church. On all matters of fellowship there must be unanimity in church action.

After a member is excluded, all the others should treat him as having been justly dealt with. There should be no sympathetic expressions which could be construed as upholding



him and condemning the church. Such sympathy is disloyalty to the church of Christ. All the members should desire and pray for his restoration; but they should desire it only on the basis of repentance and confession.

## VII

### THE WORK OF A CHURCH

A CHURCH exists for service to humanity in the name of Christ. It is for organized Christian effort, to do the work of Christ, which is four-fold. "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in the synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and disease among the people" (Matt. 4: 23). He taught, preached, healed sickness, and relieved all manner of infirmities. Such work is to be done all over the world by his people. (John 17: 18.)

*Preaching Service.* Baptist churches usually place the preaching service first, in point of importance. This is so, because for so long a time preaching and teaching were both done from the pulpit. It is, also, considered most important because it is supposed that in the preaching service the plan of salvation is more properly set forth and the soul-winning appeal made. But the evangelistic appeal can be made also very effectively in the teaching service.

The preaching service, however, should be

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magnified continually before all the people. The music, prayers, reading of the word, the sermon, the evangelistic appeal, the worshipful attitude of the members of the church, and all that is done in the preaching service should inspire those assembled with a sense of its value.

There should be an atmosphere of reverence in the preaching services of every church. "The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him" (Hab. 2:20). Sincerity should reign. There should be devout, hearty worship of the living God. When the people depart, they should feel that it was good to go to the house of the Lord, that they were helped, strengthened, and comforted by what they did, observed, and heard. To this one end everything should contribute its share, from the doxology to the last word of the benediction. A religious service should have unity and reach a logical and emotional climax in the closing hymn of praise.

The children should be required, by their parents, to attend the preaching services of the church. The church is religiously in partnership with the home for the proper formation of Christian character. Parents are lamentably short-sighted who neglect to avail themselves

fully of such a powerful and effective ally. They should magnify their pastors before their children, not for the pastors' sake, but to keep their children's hearts open to receive what the pastors proclaim.

*The Teaching Service.* This is a distinct part of a church's work and has unlimited possibilities for good. The Bible is not primarily a book of ethics, philosophy, or even theology; but a practical book for human lives, taking into consideration the whole period from birth on through eternity. The Bible should be taught, known, loved, properly interpreted, and its principles assimilated and expressed in life.

A church should maintain the most perfect organization possible to teach the Bible effectively.

*General Superintendent.* The Bible school should be organized according to the recognized principles of pedagogy. Teaching the highest truth should never be done in a slovenly, indifferent, impracticable way. The general superintendent of the Bible school should be a man well qualified who realizes the wonderful value of his great opportunity even in a small school. The school should be graded, and all the grades should have teachers and equipment to do the best work possible. The school should

have good superintendents of all the departments and complete records should be kept, so that all proper enlistment methods may be employed, both to enlarge the attendance and improve the quality of work done.

Church architecture should conform to the work of the church, providing rooms, well arranged and well located, so that the teaching will be easy and pleasant instead of hindered and handicapped continually. Every department should have its quarters and every class its room. No class should maintain an air of aloofness, but each should be a part of the school, doing its share of the educational task of the church.

*General Secretary.* The general secretary should get accurate reports from all departments. There should be accurate reports from all the classes. The combined report should be seen and appreciated by all.

The day of the "little children" Sunday school has long passed. The Bible school of the church is for every man and woman, boy and girl who needs to know about God. There is no age limit to the need for divine truth. Every church should magnify its teaching service and make it complete for all ages and conditions. Too much cannot be said for the Home Depart-

ment which, through its superintendent and visitors, carries the Bible school into the rooms of shut-ins and those who, for any reason, cannot attend the main school.

A church should encourage teacher-training so that all the teachers may be well informed and trained. Such training can be carried on in small schools just as practicably as in large ones.

The expenses of the Bible school should be paid out of the *treasury of the church*, and all the members of all the departments and classes should *subscribe to the church budget*. *It is amazing that churches have been so long realizing that the Bible school exactly fits in with Paul's direction for financing the Kingdom as stated in 1 Corinthians 16:1, 2.* Churches which have preaching services only one or two Sundays in each month can have teaching services, the Bible school, every Sunday and obey Paul's instruction. If all the members of "part-time churches" with their children and others who could be enlisted, would contribute to the church treasury through their Bible schools, the first day of every week, as the Lord prospers them, they would soon be able to have preaching services every Lord's day. This is a matter of great importance.

The Bible school should be the entire church's teaching service. The pastors, deacons, and all the members should so regard it. The Bible school is not a "part" of the church, but one of the *activities* of the church. A revival meeting is not a "part" of the church, but a church activity. So is the Bible school. Thus considered and carried on, the teaching service will come into its own proper place of importance and do an amount of good for humanity which no mathematics can estimate. The needed information for the highest and best teaching and organization may be had from denominational publishing houses.

*The Training Service.* The need for a place of training in those things which fit young converts for efficient church-membership has long been felt among Baptist churches. At length an organization, the Baptist Young People's Union, was launched, which went through various changes and adjustments until the young people's organization has become recognized as a *training service of the church*. It is another activity of the church.

*Officers.* They are president, secretary, treasurer, and such other officers as may be demanded. The purpose is to train young people in the doctrines of the Bible, the constitution of

the New Testament churches, and the work of the Baptist denomination, and to provide for them a clean, wholesome social life suited to their age.

Our denominational agencies publish books and periodical literature suited to this training work, and such literature keeps fully abreast with the needs of our young people.

*The Women's Societies.* The first group of women who worked together to promote the cause of Christ is mentioned in Luke 8:1-3. Of this group Mary Magdalene is put first and was probably the leader in the movement. There is a wide-spread belief that she had been immoral, but of that there is no proof whatever. It is doubtless a slander. These women helped to support Jesus and the apostles while they were carrying on their work.

In many Baptist churches all the women are members of the missionary society automatically. Membership in those churches carry with it membership in the society for the promotion of the church's work. This is as it should be.

It has been found best to divide such societies into groups of not more than twenty women, each group, or "circle," having its own officers, usually a leader and a secretary. All the groups,



or "circles," constitute the main society which meets, usually, once each month.

The main benefit of women's societies is in their study of missions, education, charity, and evangelism. These studies should engage the earnest attention of all the women in all Baptist churches in the world. It speeds the conquest of the world for our Redeemer.

*Men's Brotherhoods.* Every reason which supports the organization of women for study, Christian enlistment, and activity is equally cogent for the men to organize for the same purpose. In fact, as the actions of men are freer and their opportunities are more numerous for service, there are additional reasons for brotherhood organizations in the churches.

Church brotherhoods should be organized for work and not for banqueting. Social occasions, when made to promote the work of the church, are good and proper; but when they are allowed to become an end instead of a means, they are tragically shallow and trivial.

Every church brotherhood should have a definite program of service laid out annually, and its officers and committees should make all social functions, meetings, and activities work together to accomplish what is proposed.

*Officers.* The officers of such an organiza-

tion are usually president and secretary. It is well to have a corresponding secretary whose duty it is to keep the brotherhood in touch with other similar organizations and to bring valuable information concerning matters of interest to the attention of the men of the church.

*Committees.* There should be committees on evangelism, the teaching service, the training service, missions, Christian education, charities, and such other interests as the church fosters and supports. These committees should be changed at least annually, probably better semi-annually, and they should diligently attend to their part of the Master's business.

A democracy transacts its business chiefly through committees appointed from the body and charged with certain duties. Only the willing should be appointed. If a member asks to be excused his request should usually be granted. There should be continual education in enlistment so that all may become willing volunteers.

The church should require service from committees, or appoint other members who will render service. A man who accepts a place on a committee and fails to perform the duties called for, is untrue to the church that appoints him, disregards his word which was given to

the church when he agreed to act, is not fair to the other members of the committee, and is unmindful of his obligation to Christ whose work he agreed to do. This may be plain, even severe, but it is true.

## VIII

### FINANCING CHURCH WORK

WE may get a good illustration of the importance of adequate financial support of religious work from the history of the American Revolution. That war began in 1775. In January, 1781, the Revolutionary army was in a wretched condition. The shoes of the soldiers were worn out, their clothing was scant and ragged, their pay was long past due. The first day of that month the Pennsylvania troops mutinied and started toward Philadelphia to lay their case before Congress which was then in session. Sir Henry Clinton, the British commander, sent emissaries to meet them and offer bounteous supplies if they would join the British. They arrested the emissaries, turned them over to General Wayne to be hanged as spies, and proceeded toward Philadelphia. A committee was appointed by Congress and hastily dispatched to meet the troops and offer them a reward for rejecting General Clinton's offer. They spurned the reward. They did not want a reward for loyalty, but they wanted pay as soldiers. About

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the middle of that month a New Jersey brigade revolted.

Congress was thoroughly alarmed and Robert Morris was appointed Secretary of Finance. He at once instituted and put into effect a successful plan for supplying necessary funds; and from that day difficulties began to clear away. In ten months Cornwallis was Washington's prisoner, the war was over, and American independence was gained.

Who won the Revolutionary War? **THOSE WHO FOUGHT AND THOSE WHO FINANCED.** It is so with every war. The World War required millions of men and billions of dollars.

When a thing is to be done by certain means, weakening or destroying the means is hindering or making impossible the desired result. If, when a fire is burning in a city, some man dynamites the water main, the firemen are helpless. He does not set any houses on fire; but he is as guilty as if he applied the torch. Those who hinder a government's finances and prevent it from equipping its army, secure its defeat just as surely as the enemy does.

The result of hindering the support of religious teachers is impressively set forth in Nehemiah 13: 4-14. Read it and get its lessons.

Deacons of Baptist churches who allow the houses of God to be closed and permit a condition which drives ministers to farming or other secular work for a support, are modern Elia-shibs in the sight of God. If they had the loyalty to God that Nehemiah had there would not be so many declining rural churches or abandoned rural meeting-houses. Many who are guilty of such criminal neglect, and indifference will be amazed when they stand before the judgment-seat of Christ.

The wickedness that is in the world, the ignorance about God, the crime and degradation, furnish the need for religious teachers. Their number should be sufficient to ACCOMPLISH THE TASK. Whatever hinders their work is at enmity with the gospel and in opposition to the work of God, whether the hindrance is from deliberate purpose, or the result of negligence through indifference.

The widow of Zarephath fed Elijah from her handful of meal, in the hope that he might live through the famine to teach God's truth, after she and her son had starved to death. Hers was a truly heroic soul. She did not starve.

A widow, in the temple, cast two mites, all she had, into God's treasury, because she was not willing to leave the support of God's work

to "many that were rich." She would do her part.

*Two Views.* There are two views concerning supporting religious teachers. One is that they should be supported, or partly supported, by contributions made when *generous impulses are stirred* and special appeals are made. This theory takes such support *out of the realm of moral duty* and makes it a matter of the *feelings*. According to this theory, if man gives, it is well; if he does not, he has done no wrong. His giving bears no logical relation to his wealth, or income, but is wholly a matter of how he feels. It is altogether haphazard. If a church, association, or convention undertakes an enterprise which demands *continuous* support, that enterprise is then at the mercy of uncertain impulses. It is not possible by this theory to do a large, safe, expanding work.

*The other view is that God has not left so important a matter to the fickle feelings of man; but has put it in the realm of duty, and clearly revealed both the fact and the amount of the obligation.*

It is unreasonable that there is no fundamental moral duty to support the teaching of religion in a sinful world. Our heavenly Father has given a revelation of those truths which

dispel the darkness of ungodliness. His Son died on the cross to be a Redeemer from sin, guilt, and condemnation, and the most binding earthly duty of man is to acquaint the world with such facts.

It is said that "as a man purposeth in his heart, so let him give"; but that does not mean that the duty to give is entirely lacking if a miser has no purpose in his heart to do so. The duty to repent, pray, worship, observe the Sabbath, and relieve human distress is to be performed voluntarily, as a man purposeth in his heart, but surely no man is relieved of the obligation if he refuses to entertain such a spiritual or benevolent purpose. His duty is to purpose in his heart the thing God requires, to bring his heart-purpose into harmony with God's will. So it is with supporting religion. Freedom to act is freedom to act in harmony with God's will, not in violation of it.

The truth is that God holds man fully responsible for all he ought to do and will not judge him according to his impulses. It is man's duty to repent whether he is penitent or not, to be honest whether he chooses to be so or not, to worship God whether he desires to do so or not, and to support those who are chosen of God to give the world the knowledge of salvation,



whether he purposes to do so or not. (Rom. 3: 3, 6.) Not to give is *sin*, the same as any other failure to obey God.

*Agreement.* Bible scholars are nearer in agreement on the teaching of God's word about this matter than on any other. God required of the Jewish nation that they should give a tenth of their income to support religion. One of the twelve tribes was set apart to receive the tithes of the other eleven tribes, and its members were to give themselves wholly to religious work. On nothing is there more complete agreement among scholars than this.

The following six facts are admitted by all scholars:

1. Abraham, over 400 years before the Levitical priesthood, paid tithes to God's priest, Melchizedek. (Gen. 14: 18-20.)

2. Jacob, before the Levitical priesthood, vowed to give God a tenth. (Gen. 28: 22.)

3. The members of the tribe of Levi were to receive tithes for their religious service. (Num. 18: 23, 24.)

4. God declared that the tenth was his, belonged to him, for this purpose, and did not belong to the people. (Lev. 27: 30, 31.)

5. This obligation was neglected during times of backsliding, and the neglect had its disastrous

effect on the religious and social life of the people; but when revivals came, paying tithes was resumed, along with sincere prayer, worship, and other exercises. (2 Chron. 31: 1-10.)

6. This duty continued to be recognized as binding through the entire Old Testament period. (Mal. 3: 8, 12.)

Turning to the New Testament we find the following to be true:

1. Jesus told the Jews, when they gave a tenth of even their garden vegetables, that such was their obligation: "This ye ought to have done" (Matt. 23: 23; Luke 11: 42).

2. On an occasion, such as was described and demanded by Malachi 3: 10, Jesus sat and watched the people put money into the "storehouse," the treasury, and commended a poor widow who brought her small amount and put it in along with *the much that the rich put in*. (Mark 12: 41-44.)

3. There is no word of Jesus, or any writer in the New Testament, repealing or setting aside the right of God to the tenth for the support of the ministers of his truth.

4. The apostle Paul illustrated the support of the Christian ministry by the support of the priests of the Old Testament. (1 Cor. 9: 13, 14.) Instead of declaring that such support

was no longer obligatory, since the old order was changed, he distinctly declared that the obligation was continued: "EVEN SO hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." The argument, the ordained plan of the Lord, is that as they who waited on the altar lived by the portion given, which was a tenth of the income of the people; "EVEN SO," or JUST SO, those who preach the gospel should have a living by a like proportion.

5. We have five things explicitly commanded in 1 Corinthians 16:2:

(1) "Every one" should perform this duty, not those only who had the impulse at that particular time.

(2) It was to be done regularly, the first day of every week.

(3) It was to be done personally and unanimously, each from his own income.

(4) It was to be done proportionately to the income, "as God hath prospered him."

(5) It was to be stored up for use in supporting God's work as the occasions for assistance presented themselves. God's storehouse was the treasury.

6. All this is in harmony with what the

writer to the Hebrews recorded in Hebrews 7: 4, 8: "And here [in the Levitical priesthood] men that die receive tithes: but there [in the Melchizedek priesthood] he received them of whom it is witnessed that he liveth." Who is he that "liveth"? Jesus Christ, the eternal priest. So the abiding, or Christian ministry, received tithes 400 years before there was a Levitical priesthood; and, in the deeper sense, tithes were Christian before they were Levitical. In fact, they became Levitical because they belonged to the Christ-priesthood, the Christian ministry, of which the Levitical was a type.

It is every man's duty to pay a tenth for this high purpose. He may use the other nine-tenths for the natural obligations which are on him as a parent, citizen, and member of human society. The tenth is required by the great need of the world for religion; the nine-tenths may be used to discharge the other obligations of life. If a man finds himself so situated that he can make thank-offerings beyond the tenth, and not fail to meet his ordinary, human obligations, he ought to do so. This is the fair and just basis of offerings. This is the Bible plan of financing religious work: tithes and offerings. Tithes were to be laid by regularly on the day and occasion of worship, and offerings

presented when God's blessings are abundant enough to justify them.

The New Testament does not teach haphazard, spasmodic duty. It nowhere teaches that a Christian can rightfully pay less to give a knowledge of the gospel to the whole world than Jews were required to pay to give a knowledge of the types and shadows of the gospel to their age of the world.

*The Budget.* In order to finance properly the work of a church, prevent haphazard, unreliable, and insufficient support, and to enlist all the members in all the work, the pastor and deacons should approach the financial task in a Scriptural, businesslike way. The following plan is effective:

1. All the church-members should be kept fully informed concerning their financial obligation. This may be done by sermons, tracts, and all the means of informing the membership.

2. A definite date for closing the fiscal year should be adopted by the church. Usually it should be December 31, at which time the books should close for the year.

3. About the first of October arrangements should be begun for the budget for the following year.

4. An accurate list of the membership should be prepared so that canvassing may be easy and thorough.

5. There should be a meeting of the pastor, deacons, Sunday school superintendent, the president of the women's organization, the president of the young people's organization, the president of the men's brotherhood, and all other officers, or leaders, in the church's departments that might participate in the budget, or assist in the enlistment of the membership. At this meeting the full and complete local and denominational budget should be made out, stating every item and the amount to be asked for each.

6. These items in detail should be laid before the church in its business meeting at least two months before the close of the fiscal year, and the complete budget should be *adopted by the church*.

7. When the budget is adopted it should be printed on cards of a convenient size with the fact stated that it was adopted by the church. On the reverse side of the card a pledge should be printed for signatures.

8. The pastor should preach a sermon explaining all the items of the budget clearly, and it should be given such other publicity as may

be necessary to inform fully the members of the church.

9. A complete list of present subscribers should be prepared with the amount per week each is paying. This list should be gone over carefully by the financial committee of the deacons and those who should be asked to increase their subscriptions should be indicated for the convenience of the canvassers.

10. When this is done, and all is ready for the canvass, a day should be set to make the canvass of the entire membership. It should be done in one afternoon, if at all possible.

11. The membership should be divided GEOGRAPHICALLY, assigning to two canvassers not more than twenty names, until all the members are included in the several lists. Two canvassers should go together. The members should be requested to be at home during the afternoon of that day.

12. The canvassers should start from the church not later than 2 p. m., make a complete canvass of the membership, ask for a subscription from every member of the church, and return to the church not later than 6 p. m., and turn all lists over to the finance committee.

13. A complete list of subscriptions should be made up from the signed cards; the teams



should be requested to see those whom they failed to see.

14. If the required amount is not subscribed, the deacons should consider the situation and advise what steps to take for further enlistment.

15. The finance committee should solicit new members as they are received into the church, from time to time. It should be made perfectly clear to all members that the church expects every member to pay for the support of the work that the church is doing.

16. It should be understood that a subscription is continuous until canceled or readjusted by the subscriber. Every church should stand ready continually to readjust subscriptions on account of changed financial condition of members.

17. All subscriptions should be paid by the week, if at all possible, simply because it is Scriptural, according to 1 Corinthians 16:1, 2. Doubtless it was so "ordered" because *paying to support worship is inseparably joined in principle with the act of worship*. The first day of the week, the resurrection memorial, is the day of worship for Christians who obey the New Testament.

18. The Bible school, the teaching service of the church, furnishes the best conceivable op-



portunity for putting into practise Scriptural, financial support of religion. Because:

(1) It meets on the first day of every week.

(2) All the members of the church should be in the teaching service.

(3) It offers an opportunity for training young people concerning this Scriptural obligation and enables them to form the Scriptural habit.

All special, or designated, contributions should go through the treasury of the contributor's church and all such amounts should be scrupulously applied according to the wishes of those who give them.

## IX

### GENERAL DENOMINATIONAL BODIES

THE task of New Testament churches is the evangelization and transformation of the whole world according to the Christian ideal. In performing this task the gospel must be preached in all the world and Christian institutions established and maintained.

*Cooperation.* Churches engaged in this world-task must cooperate or fail. Such cooperation to succeed must be in harmony with the fundamental principles of New Testament church organization. There is no danger in vast operations so long as the churches observe and obey such principles.

Baptists should remember that:

1. A church is a local organization only.
2. Two or more churches may cooperate in accomplishing a common task.
3. All religious cooperation, either personal or organized, is *wholly voluntary*.

Cooperating Baptist churches have organized councils, associations, conventions, the Baptist World Alliance, and other bodies.

*Councils.* Councils are temporary and when they accomplish the purpose for which they are called they adjourn *sine die*.

Councils may be called by:

A local church, to ordain a minister, advise in a perplexing case, or to recognize a new church.

*Ordaining Council or Presbytery.* When an ordaining council, or presbytery, is called it is usually by a letter addressed to other churches requesting them to send their pastors, or other ordained ministers of their membership, on a given date and hour, for the purpose of ordaining the brother whose name is stated, to the full work of the gospel ministry. Some churches request that one or more deacons be sent, also; but this practise is unscriptural.

When the day arrives the presbytery should organize by electing its own moderator and secretary. The moderator is usually the pastor of the church calling the presbytery. He should select different members of the presbytery to take certain parts in the ceremony. Usually the order is about as follows:

1. The presbytery meets privately and organizes; the moderator assigning to each member his part in the ceremony.

2. The church meets with the presbytery present.

3. Usually a sermon is preached by some member of the presbytery, or the brother to be ordained.

4. The pastor calls the church in conference, or business session.

5. Some member of the church, usually the chairman of the board of deacons, presents, with appropriate remarks, the candidate for ordination.

6. The member of the presbytery who is chosen for that duty examines the candidate concerning his Christian experience, his call to the ministry, and his knowledge of Christian doctrines. Other members of the presbytery may ask questions, also, bringing out any point more clearly.

7. After the examination is concluded the presbytery usually retires to decide what recommendation it will make to the church.

8. The presbytery returns and makes its recommendation. If it has so recommended, and the church approves, a motion is passed by the church instructing the presbytery "to proceed with the ordination." If the recommendation is adverse the presbytery adjourns *sine die*,

and the church takes such further steps as it deems wise.

9. If instructed to proceed with the ordination, the moderator of the presbytery requests the candidate to kneel and the members of the presbytery kneel about him. The church and the congregation kneel, and the member of the presbytery who is designated to do so, leads the ordaining prayer. At the conclusion of the prayer the candidate remains kneeling, the presbytery and the congregation rise from their knees and the members of the presbytery, led by their moderator, solemnly lay their hands upon the head of the candidate. After the imposition of hands the candidate rises and is seated.

10. Then a member of the presbytery delivers a charge to the candidate, addressing him as an ordained minister and outlining his duties and obligations in such official position.

11. Following the charge to the candidate, it is usual for another member of the presbytery to deliver a charge to the church. If the candidate, then ordained, has been elected pastor of that church it is appropriate for such a charge to include the duties of the church to its pastor in cooperation with him. If he is only a member of the church and not the pastor, it is

proper for the charge to set forth in a general way the duties of churches to ministers, especially those in their own membership.

12. Following the charge to the church it is customary for another member of the presbytery to present a copy of the Bible to the candidate, with appropriate remarks concerning it as the word of God, and an exhortation as to its sacred use.

13. After the presentation of the Bible, the members of the presbytery and members of the church give to the candidate their hands in recognition of his ordination to the ministry.

14. The candidate pronounces the benediction. The presbytery prepares a Certificate of Ordination which, when properly signed, is presented to the one ordained. A copy should be spread upon the records of the church, and another copy may properly be recorded in the records of the county, at the county-seat.

*Councils of Recognition.* In some parts of America and elsewhere, when a new church is constituted a day is set for a recognition service. Other Baptist churches in adjoining communities are invited to send their pastors and some of their members to take part in such a service. The council is organized and examines into the manner in which the church was con-

stituted; and, finding that the proceedings were regular, formally recognizes the organization as a regular Baptist church.

*Council of Advice.* Sometimes controversies arise in the ongoing of a church that are extremely difficult and perplexing, and the membership seeks advice from other churches in settling them. A letter is sent to the churches from which advice is sought asking that messengers be sent at a given time to advise the church in the matter. The messengers meet as a council and are made acquainted with all the facts on all sides of the controversy. They then formulate advice to the church. The church and all parties concerned either accept or reject the advice given. Councils chosen by all parties concerned are called *mutual councils*.

*Ex-parte Councils.* When a member of a church feels that the church has done him an injury and refuses to correct its action, he may ask for a council and lay the case before it. In such a case the advice is given to the member requesting it. If the council agrees with the member, it sometimes occurs that the church takes notice of the council's action, reopens the case and reverses its former action. Ex-parte councils are more frequently requested by ministers than by others.

Some take the position that all ministers have the right to be tried by a council of ministers whenever accusations are brought against them, but this is neither Scriptural nor in harmony with the principles of Baptist church government. In a Baptist church there are not two degrees of membership, one for ministers and another for others. The church ought not to receive an accusation against an elder (minister) except on the testimony of "two or three witnesses" (1 Tim. 5: 19); but if the testimony is credible and sufficient, the church is as competent to deal with accused elders as with anybody else.

*Denominational Organizations.* The churches cooperate through denominational organizations to accomplish a work larger than is possible for them to do working alone. The main denominational organizations are District Associations, State Conventions, Conventions covering a number of States or an entire nation, and the Baptist World Alliance.

A Baptist general organization is not composed of churches. A Baptist church is an independent, self-governing body, complete in itself, is not composed of other organizations, nor, as a body, can it be joined to or united with any other organization of any kind. If two Baptist



churches should unite both would cease to exist and the united body would be another Baptist church.

A Baptist general body is not "the Baptist Church." This is true, because, it is a fundamental New Testament doctrine that a church is only a local organization, worshiping at one place, and composed of a local group of persons as members.

We use the expressions, "the churches in a District Association," "the churches in a State Convention, or Association," "the churches in a Baptist Convention." Such expressions are misleading. We mean *the churches cooperating through these general bodies*. When such an organization meets no church is there in any sense.

A Baptist general body is advisory only, and its whole power is moral—the power of persuasion and enlistment. It may have great persuasive power over a church, but this is so only when the church believes that it is promoting the cause of Christ and carrying on Christian institutions. The agencies of all Baptist general bodies make their appeals to the churches solely by moral suasion. The plans adopted and the measures proposed by the general body are laid before the churches, and they may support

them or decline to do so. It is a matter of the utmost freedom so far as the churches are concerned. If what is proposed by the general body promotes the cause of Christ, the loyalty of the church to Christ should constrain the members to support it. Otherwise, the church may not do so and feel that it is doing right. Let this be constantly remembered. The relation of churches to general bodies is simply one of voluntary cooperation.

A Baptist general body has its own constitution and is a unit, complete in itself. Its members know, when they organize it, that they can do nothing except as they enlist voluntary cooperation. They desire to carry on work upon this basis only. The work is enlarged as cooperation is increased through the various means of information, inspiration, and enlistment. As to authority over the churches they have none.

The churches, being informed about the larger work to be undertaken, decide in their business meetings to cooperate with other churches in that work. Messengers are selected to meet at some place with messengers chosen by other churches and deliberate about the work proposed to be done. They meet, hear reports, devise plans, institute measures, and adjourn. Then the messengers return home. The reasons

which prompted the undertaking, the good to be accomplished, and how it will promote the cause of Christ and bless the world are laid before the churches. Interest is created, those who oppose it criticize and object. Those who favor it give of their means and morally support the work. Thus, the general bodies carry on the work, enlarging it as they can, according to the amount of support obtained.

A general body becomes permanent by incorporating under the laws of the country, or by selecting an Executive Board and other agencies to carry on the work between the sessions of the body. Such boards and agencies make their reports in the meetings of the general bodies, and such reports and recommendations become the basis for further discussions of advancement, adjustment, and enlistment. Such meetings are deliberative and governed by the rules of parliamentary practise. The same principles govern all. The reader may apply to the secretary of any such body for detailed information.



## PART II



## THE BUSINESS MEETING

CHURCHES should have business meetings at least once a month. There are two kinds—regular and called meetings.

*The Regular Business Meeting.* This should be set at such a time each month as would be convenient for the members of the church and be easily remembered. At this meeting all the different department heads should make reports to the church. The entire work of the church should be brought up for review at every business meeting in order that every member may know what is being done.

*Presiding Officer.* In Baptist churches the presiding officer is usually called “moderator.” He should be the pastor, when that officer is present. A church might select some one else to preside, but such action is not fair, either to the pastor or to the church. The responsibilities of the pastoral office are such that his position should be magnified by the church in order for him to render the best service.

In the absence of the pastor another member is chosen moderator *pro tem*. If some other minister is present he may be asked to preside.

If the pastor is present, and some of the business affects him personally in such a way as might be embarrassing or influence the action of the church, he should ask to be excused from presiding, and some one should be chosen in his stead.

*Recording Officer.* The one who keeps the record of the business transacted by a Baptist church is usually called "clerk." "Secretary" is as good a word. It is his business to write a faithful, impartial, full, clear, concise account of what is done.

He will not record motions or resolutions that are not adopted unless they are very important to the history of the church. He will not record the names of those voting for or against a motion or resolution unless he deems it important or unless instructed to do so. If the matter voted upon is of very great importance he may keep on file the ballots cast. He is a historian and should be governed by considerations which guide a careful keeper of important records. If the clerk is not present, the church may select some one to act as clerk *pro tem*. It is his duty to keep the record faithfully and turn it over to the clerk of the church as soon as he has an opportunity.

At each business meeting the clerk should



read the unread minutes of all previous meetings, give the names and addresses of members joining the church since the previous regular business meeting, the names of all to whom letters of commendation to other churches have been granted, with the names of those churches, and a clear, concise history of all that the church has done since its previous business meeting. Minutes when correct should be formally adopted.

*Unfinished Business.* After the clerk has read the minutes, the next thing in order is unfinished business and to hear reports of committees previously appointed. Such committees should use all proper diligence to be ready to report. A committee that wilfully disregards the work the church entrusted to it should be discharged and another appointed in its stead. Delays and wilful neglect by committees should not be tolerated. It is not necessary to have a motion to take up unfinished business, as it is before the church in proper order.

When unfinished business has been attended to, new business should be taken up. The moderator simply announces, "New business is now in order." A motion is not necessary.

*The Deacons.* If the deacons have any general recommendations to make to the church

they may be made at this time. Such recommendations should be offered, solely, to assist the church in taking up and transacting its business and should be considered as suggestions only. In dealing with any special matter which the deacons have previously considered, they may offer recommendations to the church. Such recommendations when offered to the church are considered and disposed of as it deems wise.

*The Treasurer.* This officer should make a complete report of all money received since the previous business meeting, all amounts paid out, the condition of the church's resources for current expenses and denominational work, and a statement of the church's obligations. These reports should be filed and be audited either by an approved auditor or an auditing committee appointed by the church. All persons handling funds should insist on audits by competent auditors.

*The Sunday School Superintendent.* A report should be made to the church by the superintendent of the Bible school. It should cover the work of all departments. It should contain such information as the church may need to carry on the Teaching Department successfully.

*The Women's Missionary Society.* This organization should report regularly to the church

in its business meetings. Such reports should show all the work done during the month.

*The Young People's Societies.* The training department of the church should make reports in the business meetings, that the church may know what is being done in the training of young people for future usefulness as church-members. Each society should submit its report by its president, or secretary, and such report should include every important item so that the church may be fully informed and enlisted in the training and development of its young members.

*The Brotherhood.* The men's organization should report its activities including all items which are of interest to the church.

All other organizations promoting the church's activities should report at every regular business meeting. Such meetings should be so comprehensive in their scope that the whole church work would come into review for prayer, planning, and promotion, or adjustment. In this way such meetings may sustain interest and send life-currents of enthusiasm throughout the entire body.

*Called Meetings.* These should be called only when necessity demands. If the business can wait until the regular meeting of the church it

should be allowed to do so. No business should be brought up or decided upon at a called meeting which would vitally effect the church's harmony or its property.

*Notice.* There should be due notice given to the membership previous to any called meeting to transact church business. Such notice should set forth the time and place and the nature of the business to be transacted. It is not proper at such a meeting to bring up or transact other business, notice of which has not been given.

*Adjourned Business Meetings.* If either a regular or called business meeting adjourns to another date, the meeting had on such date is simply a continuation of the previous meeting, and those present may transact any business which might properly come before the one which adjourned.

*Order of Business.* The following may be used as an Order of Business with changes as may appear wise:

1. Call to order, by the moderator.
2. Singing, reading of the Scriptures.
3. Prayer.
4. Reading and adopting minutes of previous meeting.
5. Reports of committees.
6. Reports of the treasurer, Sunday-school

superintendent, and young people's societies, women's missionary societies, the Brotherhood, and all other auxiliary organizations of the church.

7. New business.

8. Adjourn.

9. Benediction.

## RULES OF ORDER

A BAPTIST church, in its business meetings, is a deliberative body and is governed by the rules of parliamentary practise which usually govern such bodies. The effort should always be to transact business with fairness, deliberation, and dispatch. The spirit of Christ should prevail, and all should keep constantly in mind to bear and forbear with each other.

*The Floor.* All the members are equally entitled to speak on anything before the church, or offer motions, resolutions, or other means of bringing matters to the church for its consideration. When two or more members address the moderator at the same time he will name the one he first recognizes. If he is in doubt, he will recognize the one farthest from him. Courtesy would dictate that a member should not speak more than twice on any measure while it is being discussed. A member desiring the floor should rise and address the moderator. That officer then calls the name of the member in recognition of his right to speak. It is improper, and not respectful, to address the moderator, or to offer a motion, while seated.

*Motions.* A motion must be seconded before it is presented by the moderator for consideration. It is his duty to state a motion when seconded, after which the church will consider it.

When a motion is before the house no other motion may be entertained. It is in order to move an amendment by striking out or adding to the pending motion. There may be an amendment to an amendment, but further than this it is not proper to go. An amendment must be germane to the original motion.

It is parliamentary to offer a substitute for the pending motion, and the substitute may be in conflict with it. The vote is taken on a substitute motion first; then, if the substitute is lost, on amendments; the last one offered should be voted on first and the original motion voted on as amended if any amendment is adopted.

When a motion is duly made and seconded and stated by the moderator for consideration, it may not be withdrawn without the consent of the body. Such consent may be given by a majority vote.

An amendment may be accepted by the mover and the seconder of any motion, and it then becomes a part of the original motion, unless there is objection on the part of some other

member. If there is such objection the amendment must be offered separately to get consideration by the body.

*Privileged Questions.* There are certain motions which are considered privileged, i. e., must have precedence over others. They are motions to adjourn, to lay on the table, to amend, postpone, commit, and to have the previous question. None of these, however, may be made while a member is speaking or a vote is being taken. If a motion to adjourn is lost it cannot be renewed until some other business has been transacted.

When a motion or resolution is offered that is obnoxious to the purpose and business of the body, a member may object to consideration being given to it. Such an objection is not debatable and must be voted on immediately. If it is sustained by a majority vote the obnoxious proposition is dismissed. If it is not sustained, the matter to which objection was made is before the body.

Privileged questions are not debatable, unless they are modified as to time, place, or purpose.

*Previous Question.* A member desiring to stop discussion and come immediately to a vote may call for the previous question. When such



a call is made the moderator will say: "The previous question is called for; shall the call be sustained? Those who are in favor of sustaining the call say, 'Aye.' Those who are opposed, will say, 'No.'" If the call is sustained, the moderator will say: "Shall the main question now be put? Those who favor will say, 'Aye.' Those who oppose will say, 'No.'" If the affirmative is in the majority, the moderator will put the original proposition. If the call is not sustained, or if the body votes not to act on the main question, discussion will proceed. A motion to lay on the table has precedence over the previous question and when made must be put without debate.

*Motions to Reconsider.* Such a motion can be made or seconded only by one who voted with the majority. If such a motion carries, the matter reconsidered is before the body just as it was acted on previously.

*Points of Order.* If a member believes that the moderator should make a certain ruling to preserve the orderly conduct of the business, he may rise and present the point of order. The moderator must rule on the point. If the ruling is unsatisfactory an appeal to the body may be taken. Such an appeal is decided by a majority vote. It should be made only when to proceed

on the moderator's ruling would work harm, or injustice, or appear clearly unparliamentary.

*Deciding Vote.* When there is an equal number on each side, the moderator may cast the deciding vote. Should he decline to do so the proposition is declared lost. A moderator is under no obligation to vote in such cases and may decline to do so without prejudice; in fact, it is often prudent not to cast the deciding vote.

*Order of Business.* When an order of business is adopted by a body, the time set for the consideration of certain matters and for adjournment must be regarded by the body. When the time fixed for the consideration of a matter arrives, it is the duty of the moderator to stop consideration of all other things and declare that matter in order.

When a set time to adjourn arrives, the moderator should so state and pronounce the meeting adjourned unless there is a motion to reconsider and extend the time.

*Personal Privilege.* If a member feels that an injury may be done him, or by him to some one else, he may arise and ask the privilege of a personal explanation. This privilege should be used rarely and should not be abused.

*Miscellaneous.* In a Baptist church those members who are present at regular business

meetings constitute a quorum. A church may fix the number of members necessary for a quorum at called meetings; otherwise those who are present are competent to transact business.

A committee may properly attend only to business committed to it. When a number of names are called, as constituting a committee, the first one named is usually chairman. He may, however, call the committee together to effect its own organization.

Calls for the "question" cannot deprive a member of his right to discuss a pending measure. The proper way to stop debate is to call for the previous question, or lay on the table.

## MARRIAGE CEREMONY

MARRIAGE is an institution appointed by our heavenly Father for the happiness and welfare of the human race. In harmony with such wise appointment, states and nations, by their laws, decree that this relation shall be duly solemnized. We are therefore met to unite in marriage Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ and M\_\_\_\_\_.

You may join your right hands. (Hands are joined.)

Mr. \_\_\_\_\_, do you take the woman whom you hold by the right hand to be your wedded wife, promising to live with her according to God's ordinance, and be to her a true and faithful husband in health and in sickness, in prosperity and in adversity, until the union into which you are now entering is severed by death? (Answer, "I do.")

M\_\_\_\_\_, do you take the man whom you hold by the right hand to be your wedded husband, promising to live with him according to God's ordinance, and be to him a true and faithful wife in health and in sickness, in pros-  
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perity and in adversity, until the union into which you are now entering is severed by death? (Answer, "I do.")

(When a ring is used the following may be said:

In token of the affection thus pledged, you will give and receive this ring, which in all ages and among all people is a symbol of that which is measureless and so of measureless affection. May it ever be so to you, as truly expressing your love and mutual confidence.)

Because of these promises which you have made to each other, and your affection which you have plighted to each other, I, by the authority vested in me, as a minister of the gospel, pronounce you husband and wife, henceforth and to be in interest and destiny—*one*. And what God hath joined together let not man part asunder.

Let us in prayer ask the divine blessing on this union.

# FORMS

## LETTER OF DISMISSION

\_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_.

To the \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church:

This certifies that \_\_\_\_\_ is a member with us in good standing. At \_\_\_\_\_ own request \_\_\_\_\_ is hereby given this letter of commendation to you. When \_\_\_\_\_ shall have united with you (of which you will please inform us, using the attached form) \_\_\_\_\_ connection with us will terminate.

(Insert information concerning any official position the member may hold.)

By order of the \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church  
in business session the \_\_\_\_\_ day of  
\_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_, *Moderator.*

\_\_\_\_\_, *Clerk.*

.....

(Perforations to tear off the following)

## LETTER OF NOTIFICATION

\_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_.

To the \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church:

This is to notify you that your letter commending \_\_\_\_\_ to our fellowship was received, and that \_\_\_\_\_ united with us on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_.

The \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church.

By \_\_\_\_\_, *Clerk.*

## MINUTES

The \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church convened in regular (called) business meeting at \_\_\_\_\_ o'clock on \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_, the pastor presiding. After reading the Scriptures and prayer the following business was transacted: (Here record what was done.) Adjourned.

\_\_\_\_\_, *Clerk.*

## LETTER OF COMMENDATION

\_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_.

This certifies that \_\_\_\_\_ is a member of the \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church in good standing and is hereby recommended to other Baptist churches and all Christian people wherever \_\_\_\_\_ may go while temporarily absent from us.

\_\_\_\_\_,  
*Pastor* \_\_\_\_\_ *Baptist Church.*

## CERTIFICATE OF ORDINATION

This is to certify that brother \_\_\_\_\_ was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry, by prayer and laying on of the hands of the presbytery, on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_.

He was called to ordination by the \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church, of which he was a member, which had ample knowledge of his piety, orthodoxy, and gifts.



The presbytery was composed of the following ordained ministers, who after a deliberate and thorough examination cordially recommended him for ordination: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Our beloved brother, the bearer of this Credential, is therefore commended to all Baptist churches and all to whom he may minister, as having been publicly and Scripturally set apart to preach and to administer the ordinances of Christ.

\_\_\_\_\_, *Moderator.*

\_\_\_\_\_, *Clerk.*

(All members of the presbytery may sign their names also.)

Given at \_\_\_\_\_  
on \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_.

## MINISTERIAL LICENSE

\_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_.

This certifies that brother \_\_\_\_\_ is a member in good standing of the \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church. Trusting that God has called

him to be a preacher of the gospel, the church hereby commends him to those among whom he may labor in that capacity, and prays that he may be "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

By the order of the \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church, on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_, *Moderator.*

\_\_\_\_\_, *Clerk.*

## CALL FOR COUNCIL OF RECOGNITION

\_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_.

To the \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church:

*Dear Brethren:*

There is a company of *brethren and sisters in Christ*, who wish to become an organized church to obey his commandments, observe his ordinances, and promote his cause. You are therefore requested to send your pastor and two brethren to meet in council at \_\_\_\_\_ on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_, at \_\_\_\_\_ o'clock to take the matter into consideration. If the council approves the

organization, said brethren and sisters will be glad to have the moral support of its public recognition.

The following churches are invited to send messengers. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Fraternally,

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Committee.*

## CALL FOR A COUNCIL OF ORDINATION

\_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_.

THE \_\_\_\_\_ BAPTIST CHURCH

To the \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church:

*Dear Brethren:*

This is to request you to send your pastor and two other elders, if so many are members of your church, to meet in council on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_, at \_\_\_\_\_ o'clock, to consider the propriety of ordaining to the full work of the gospel ministry, brother

\_\_\_\_\_.

The following churches have, also, been sent like requests:

---

By order of the church,  
 \_\_\_\_\_, *Clerk.*

## CALL FOR AN ADVISORY COUNCIL

\_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_.

To the \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church:

The condition of our church is such and our perplexities so great, at present, that it is deemed advisable to invite a council of prudent men to advise with us that we may act with wisdom and in harmony with the will of God.

We therefore are writing you to request that you send your pastor and two other brethren to meet in council with us at \_\_\_\_\_ on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_, at \_\_\_\_\_ o'clock \_\_\_\_ m.

The following churches have been sent a like request:

---

By order of the church.

\_\_\_\_\_, *Clerk.*

## MINUTES OF A COUNCIL

\_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_.

A council called by the \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church met at \_\_\_\_\_ on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_.

Brother \_\_\_\_\_ was chosen moderator and \_\_\_\_\_ clerk.

Prayer by \_\_\_\_\_.

The church records referring to the call of the council were read, from which it appeared that the object of the call was (here state the object clearly and fully).

The following composed the council: \_\_\_\_\_

(Then record what was done.)

\_\_\_\_\_, *Moderator.*

\_\_\_\_\_, *Clerk.*



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